

CASTLE OF  
FRANKENSTEIN



FILMS  
& TV

JUNE

Andy Warhol's Frankenstein / Mel Brooks' Frankenstein

Castle  
of

# FRANKENSTEIN

85¢  
No. 25

SPECIAL - TIME MACHINE'S  
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Dracula &  
Frankenstein**



**The Genius  
Of  
George Pal**

Castle  
of

# FRANKENSTEIN

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FRONT COVER: Utilizing the special *Callforious Dimensional Reprographic* Cover technique, artist Marcus Ross recreates the gory mood of an immortal SFantasy film classic—George Peck's *TIME MACHINE*.

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# THE CASTER Mail Box

## MUTTERINGS FROM THE MOVIE MAUSOLEUM

### ITEM... FILM CRITIC 'EXPOSE'

At last, many have come to a justifiable conclusion that most Establishment critics are unworthy of their calling or worthier. Obviously, then, this may explain why so many films they detect are the ones you admire, and why films they had hoped would bomb like *2001* and *EXORCIST* turned into smash hits.

Suspicion exists—and much of it is well-founded—that most of the "elite" critics, being frustrated filmmakers, harbor deep-rooted resentment stemming from parasitic envy. Many less recognized reviewers have no grounding in the arts nor the least understanding of filmmaking techniques, and they continue to prove it in their blabberings. While some knowledge and sense for art is all that an intelligent essayist requires to share and use above the dung heap, cultural stamping is no use to a "elite," a total boozhoo.

Imaginative sensitivity is fundamentally the sole basis for forming a rational and honest appreciation of ungracious. It cannot be imbibed by years of specialized training nor through a long array of degrees and doctorates. Even parrots and sound tapes collect information.

Not all "name" critics follow the same pattern, of course, whether you like them or not. Many come from different backgrounds. Some may mean they're former S & M buccas, or hold down at one time prison guard jobs, and I know of one character who believes that Martin Bernann is alive and will do a film column in New York. Some critics, who may never become Agents of Hogan's widow, do their thing year in and year out, and probably they mean well, but never improve; they've deluded themselves into believing that they've attained a deranged status that their films enjoy more of themselves than about films. And... they'll becaus everyone to prove their exotic "credentials" and monolithic obtuseness.

Some of the excited "elite" get even fatter and often when the nose they point forth.

So, you're still wondering how "they" got their big jobs, eh? For the answer to this burning question, we go for the first

(continued on page 59)

RICHARD COHMAN & KIM NOVAK

Dear CTB: Issues devoted solely to new releases should not be avoided. I'd enjoy seeing more recognition given "forgotten" films of merit, as with Abbas Kermick's *NOT OF THIS EARTH* (CoF 231 retrospective). Though a bit awkwardly written, it made some good points. I am especially intrigued by Kermick's notion of the alien vampires "becoming" the reigning Cedilla. It is among the best of Roger Corman's early efforts, along with the darkly amusing *WASP WOMAN*, the flawed but clever *CREATURE FROM THE HAUNTED SEA*, and the absolutely brilliant *THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS*, one of Corman's finest efforts. Does anyone have any current information and/or career background for Paul Burke? He must be about 65 by now.

Though not startling or even especially clever, I enjoyed *TALES THAT WITNESS MADNESS*, principally because of the familiar faces and nice performances. It's Kim Novak's first theatrical film since the horrendous *THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY* in 1959, and she does look lovely. She's in rather odd position in that her carefully builtup career was very quickly ruined by idiot casting decisions that put her in roles way beyond her depth, onscreen have dumped on her for years in spite of the fact she can act (see especially *VERTIGO* and *MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT*), and now she's had news as far as major producers are concerned. Her 1973 TV film, *THE THREE GIRL FROM THE LEFT*, is amusing because, as an "aging" chorus girl, she's infinitely more attractive than the young whippersnappers that the movie makers shun's supposed to be disillusioned by. At any rate, Novak is, as your reviewer points out, not yet ready for "mother" roles.

In parting, I'd recommend that the execs

in the adservice pick up *Judith Crist's TV Guide to the Movies*. Her smugness is especially toward SF/fantasy-horror films, is terribly appealing. But then again, for any one who can seriously call *THE WILD BUNCH* "The most horrific of 1969" is hopelessly befuddled.

David Hayes, 6460 Center St., Mantol, Ohio 44660.

### THE ANIMATORS

Dear CTB: After having thoroughly read all three issues of CoF dealing with Ray Harryhausen (CoF 19, 20, 21), I have suddenly realized what great potential your mag has for presenting the animation/fantasy medium. Most articles on Harryhausen and his firm would be in order and coverage on Jim Denoff would really prove interesting. I have admired and appreciated the field of animation for the past ten years. Your publication, above all others, has dealt with this aspect of fantasy films most intelligently. Best wishes towards your future issues.

Maureen Keeshan, 452 Faculty Ave., Winnipeg, Man., Canada.



### THE LATE JOHN JORDAN

Dear CTB: As an SF/fantasy-horror film fan nearly 20 years, I've been especially interested in the Bond films. Therefore, I am a rather careful reader of CoF since it occasionally concerns itself with news on Bond. In your "TV Monologues" in CoF 21 for *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE*, you state "John Jordan... lost his life while photographing the film's spectacular aerial takes." According to my references, Mr. Jordan was killed while working on *CATCH 22*. He lost a leg during the filming of *YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE* in 1967.

Steve Chomendar, 18 Birdseye, Morning Glory Lane, Mansfield, Pa. 16945.

— You must be right, but the info listed came from a USA featurette on "The making" of *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE* — CTB

Dear CTB: Alas, TV censorship is getting worse. When I saw *THUNDERBALL* on TV, it was butchered beyond belief. You may recall the steam-room sequence, well, you see Bond lead the women in, but then it's cut. Best damned scene ever! I could've died right there. Thank God I saw it originally in a theater. By the way, you should cover all those classic Bond films, especially *THUNDERBALL*—deserve a whole issue to them. The TV version of *Dracula* (1958) was fabulous. Meanwhile, I hope something will be done about TV censorship.

I agree with you on the issue of comics. 95% of them are trash.

Al Gray, 2018 St. Raymounds Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10457.

— Only movie we'd get uncut, free access to TV entertainment news, etc., is when they crack down on the censor policies of the *homebox* FCC, as a great gesture adopted by the present administration of the TV industry (but are you still in it when it refers entirely to the *expensive Movie Ratings*?). Cable TV, of course, is our answer (and easily available), but under heavy restraints because of "special interest" groups that prevent it from expanding in most areas. A few stations in NYC already have it, it's very cheap, about \$25 for installation, \$6 to \$8 a month for maintenance, and round-about \$100, since only enough old or old planes in theaters. Cable TV also shows full-quality, real adult stuff, controversial times that commercial TV won't. "Sex" shows, etc. Another advantage to Cable most people don't know of (apart from several extra channels) is that every regular TV station can be received in without need of outside antenna, the *horizontal ghost and interference*. Once *Free Enterprise* and *democracy* come back again (if we live to see the day), Cable and a lot of other great benefits will be easily available — CTB.

(transcribed on page 59)



# THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE



Previous page: Gunnar Hansen in "Loneface." Above: Teri McVane (as Pam) in a litter of dismembered torsos. Right: part of the cast gathered together for a sentimental "Family" group shot — a real bunch of trivial cut-ups who believe in keeping their noses close to the ground.

**THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE** is one more step up the rung of excruciatingly gory, with the accent on bludgeoning, terrorizing "FearOrama" calculated to try and make you fall out of your theater seat. "God, help us all! When will all this violence, horror and killing end?" voiced an impresario member of the audience. "NEVER, I hope!" rebutted the house's manager, gloating over his boxoffice profits.

Whatever you do, you are harshly cautioned not to see **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE**—otherwise, you should proceed "at your own risk," as some of the early horror film blubs used to say. Not that it's a failure; indeed, it succeeds too well at what it sets out to do. This movie extends the boundaries of cinematic terror and revulsion to the point where we are now forced to redefine the term "horror film."

I consider myself a hardened observer of horror films, yet this one seduced me to a pale and quivering hulk. We can check out tongue all we want about torture, violence, exploitation; yet we can't deny it takes talent to make a film as frightening that it practically has us passing in our pants. We can wag a finger at the hammy acting so common to these shockers of the raw-head-and-blood-bones variety. We can shake our heads in disbelief at the ads and prologue which claim that the plot is based on an actual incident. While they unfold, however, we are compelled

to believe that the grisliest events onscreen are really taking place. We give the tale our credence to the same extent that we believe a nightmare while we're asleep. In light of its accomplishments, this monsterpiece can be called neither tacky nor sloppy.

This production was perpetrated by a group of Texas film students who apparently saw **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** and duly absorbed its contents. Considering the subject matter, **MASSACRE** is not gratuitously gory, yet it never fails to convey the physical impact of the savage carnage it portrays.

There's no shortage of suspenseful atmosphere, either. The film begins with a quartet of young people driving happily down a road, ignore the sun-drenched beauty they pass, however fitfully it is photographed, the steady countercurrent of baleful newsmen in the car radio assure us that something dire will fall these kids, and soon. They stop at a gas station, even the gaspards are made to look minute as the attendant washes their windshield. Next they visit an old abandoned homestead. We're certain that this godforsaken abode can't be deemed as it looks. Of course, the director has draped in that dilapidated dwelling is probably the safest place. Nearby, however, is a clean-looking farmhouse, all white-washed and with a porch swing out front—the turn-out to be the headquarters of a latterday Sawney Bean. The inhabitants are all slaughterhouse employees who've failed to grasp the distinction that may be permissible with cattle isn't generally practiced upon people. One of these hapless victims stumbles upon a chamber so

filled with human bones that we might feel inclined to laugh at the overdone gruesomeness of it all. Suspended from the ceiling, however, is a live chicken, squirming and flailing in a bird cage too small to accommodate it; this leering, incongruous detail supplies precisely the right touch of genuine mortal sadness to convince us that what we see is not ridiculous, but all too real. There are other flashes of directional brilliance: a dense growth of bushes, for example, hinders the housewife's pants-snatched flight, but, owing to the weapon of the title, pose no impediment to the progress of her crazed partner (Gunnar Hansen). As the girl in distress (to put it mildly), Mariya Burova is faced with a most strenuous role which requires her to maintain her portrayal of fawning-pitched hysteria through the greater part of the film. Hansen's不懈-perpetual menace is enhanced by a leather mask which he never once removes. It may be an old trick, but it still scares.

There is now no doubt that the admen of films like **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** and **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE**—with their no-holds-barred approach to terror (and their roots in **PSYCHO**)—signify what I think is the emergence of a new school of horror cinema in America. This is not entirely a bad thing, for we can no longer depend upon horror thrillers in the classic tradition to frighten or satisfy us. The cartoonish cardboard sets of German expressionism, the pulsating shadowland of vintage Universal, the voluptuous horrors of Hammer, and the cultivated stylizations of the Coenans. If you have become overly familiar, if not almost tired, to the general public these are

the campiness of "horror movies." However, to the dedicated reader of O&F, these same elements constitute, leave us face it, a richly romantic source of cinematic beauty. Though it may grow as a tangle now and then, the traditional horror film is not horrifying; it is pleasantly scary. In its purest form this classic tradition logically culminates in the ladies' Gothic romance, where fear is eliminated and we are left with the beautiful, sinister accoutrements, washed clean of offending evanescence.

The new horror movie is gory but that, too, is not its distinguishing characteristic. More deistic is a change in emphasis which is reflected in the acting, direction and photography. Illustrating this difference is an example from THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE—a girl's finger is cut, then jammed into the mouth of a seemingly dead old man, who promptly awakes and sucks contentedly, an obscene invective of a hole at its mother's breast. Now, what precisely are we shown in this scene? A cut finger? Nothing gory about that. We see that every time we have a blood test. We're also shown someone sucking the blood from the finger. We've seen that before, too. Consequently, a Regis Corman or a Terence Fisher could stage this sequence in a manner decadent and erotic. In MASSACRE, however, it strikes a repellent, repulsive cloud which is probably disturbing, if positively tantalizing the moviegoers, leaving them grubby on the ropes. We have reached the

polar opposite of the ladies' Gothic, the beauty of the classic form has been drained away and only terror is left. The esthetic of the new horror film is the absence of any esthetic whatever. Some may deplored this. It may be argued, however, that it is more moral to portray violent death in all its horror rather than make it look strident and pretty or, worse yet, funny.

How important are direction and photography to MASSACRE'S effectiveness? These are, after all, the components by which the movie holds us in its thrall. They mean everything to it, and yet in the final analysis they mean nothing, just as the film itself ranks among both the best and the worst of the year. All that truly counts is the brutal, sucking, helpless terror we feel. And how is a critic to go about criticizing that?

—Paul Rose —

\* \* \*

Allegedly based on a true "crime" case, TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE is a grisly tale of five young people who meet a grisly end at the hands of crazed madmen in an old deserted house. Full credit goes to Tobe Hooper who directed and co-scripted this truly frightening film. Though not quite as gruesome as NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, it's far more stylized and elaborate. TCM's and NOTLD's dramatic styles are rather similar, amateurish and predictably non-existent, except for TCM's female lead, Mar-

lyn Burns—though apparently her first film, she's excellent on all counts and rides ahead in acting compared with Judith O'Dea, as well as being extremely attractive and sexually stimulating. Consequently, it's quite令人 to watch her deteriorate from a beautiful, innocent girl at the film's onset into a hysterical, blood-soaked mess at the conclusion.

Director Hooper knows how to shake up his audience. Each time one of the kids approaches the front door to the evil house, one experiences the same racing dread felt while watching THE EXORCIST, especially during Regan's hideously orgiastic. You just know something terrible was about to happen. And much to our delight, something did!

In TCM one of the boys is clubbed to death, one girl is hung on a meat hook, etc. Finally, no one is left alive except Miss Burns, and now—ready for the big surprise.

With his charming going full blast, the madman with the leather mask chases Miss Burns through the bog in what may be one of the most suspenseful sequences in film history. He runs, then gets close to her, but just now enough, though she's within inches of his reach. Here's the frenzied, frantic passing and terrific camerawork (Dunnel Pearl) puts you right in the center of the action; you actually feel it's all happening...to you—or, at least, that you're right there in those woods, watching it all happen. And, it works, because both times I saw the film the audience threw

Left: Gunnar Hansen (Leatherface) giving Teri McMillen her final "treatment." Right: Edwin Neal, a regular S&M freak,

is regaling Marilyn Burns about the salubrious qualities of a quaint Chumash environment.





Left: Gunnar Hansen on the warpath after his fleeing victim (right), Marilyn Burns who, quivering in terror, attempts to escape a horrible fate by hiding in the woods by night.



its "super-coolness" in the wood and reacted by screaming "Run... Run... Run!" to the fleeing heroine. Miss Burns is so believable and perfect, everyone wants desperately to help her.

Not all of the film is as perfect since some of the actors speak in heavy provincial drawls that make their lines often unclear or impossible to comprehend. There are also moments of embarrassingly amateurish hamminess—the madmen get a little out of hand by chewing up the scenery to shreds, raving, bellowing, raising and uncrossing their throats no tomorrow, but in spite of several such protracted scenes, you find yourself wondering if that wasn't the way it really was. The film's basic "tension" gets to be all the more gripping when you realize yourself that this is supposed to be based on actual facts ... that it did—God, help us!—happen.

Just as *NUTELD* became a cult favorite, TCM boasts all the elements of being the new buzz apparent to the Throne of Gore-Shock-ooze...ironically, posing once again what humanity has been aware of in the *Wings of Evil*—the most humble monster of all is, at times, man himself.

—Richard Easonano —

#### THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

##### Cast & Credits:

Marilyn Burns, Allen Danziger, Paul Partain, William Vail, Tim McLean, Edwin Neal, Jim Siedow, Gunnar Hansen, John Dugan, Jerry Lacy, Dennis Hopper, Michael J. Pollard, *Credit* (cont'd.) Jay Purdy Prod. & dir.: Tobe Hooper. Story/Screenplay: Klein Henzel, Tobe Hooper. Cinematography: Dan Penn. Art dir.: Robert D. Boyle. Set dec.: Don M. Gandy. Music: Editors: George Richardson, Larry Carroll. Music score: Tobe Hooper, Wayne Bell.



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D



# Andy Warhol's DRACULA

# and Frankenstein





Previous page: Udo Kier as Dracula and Frankenstein. Above: Udo Kier, as the Baron, holds up the head he's just acquired for his male zombie.

ANDY

### WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN

Anyone who has ever read a 3-D comic book cannot fail to appreciate the momentous achievement which Andy Warhol's *FRANKENSTEIN* signifies. Even at the cost of the eyestrain required (a considerable amount), this is a visual adventure of monumental proportions. Each camera set-up is roughly comparable to a single panel in one of those 3-D comics; this means that, with every change of angle, one's eyes need a couple seconds to adjust themselves before spatial depth can be perceived. The perspective compositions recall the artwork in the E.C. horror comics of the 50's. The lascivious preoccupations of the screenplay, meanwhile, show the influence of underground fumies.

Mak no mistake about it—this is a first-rate production. The cinematography is breathtaking, its beauty enhanced by the 3-D process. Of course, as in many another film released under the Warhol aegis, there's no shortage of gay notations: practically every chamber in Frankenstein's castle is adorned

with nude male statuary. The Baron himself gets impaled on a lance, his detached gall bladder dangles and drips from the toe of this fatal phallic symbol.

The music score is lyrical. The screen play is evocative, but disarmingly slippery; reference is made to the impending war of Frankenstein's parents, mermets tell the conversation turns to bequests intended from these folks. Whether they are alive or dead is never made clear.

Udo Kier, who looks immoderately like Richard Todd, looks discipline in the title role, but director Paul Morrissey has conceived and written this part along perfectly valid lines. The Baron, you see, has a six footish for internal organs; the perversion is merely a logical extension of the scientific obsession expressed by such unscrupulous surgeons as Colin Clive and Peter Cushing, whose organs are confined to the intellectual sphere.

But this Frankenstein's monster making is inspired by a fascist dream of originating, breeding, and ruling a new master race. Appropriately, his theme music is the *Pilgrim's Chorus* from Wagner's "Tannhäuser" and, like any good Volksong, he is married to his own sister. She is portrayed by Monique van Vooren in a stately performance of icy precision. Her angel bearing is unblushed in her initial entrance, which finds her riding,

head held high, in an open carriage through a Serbian forest.

Warhol's *FRANKENSTEIN* may be cerebral entertainment, but it's not without esthetic justification.

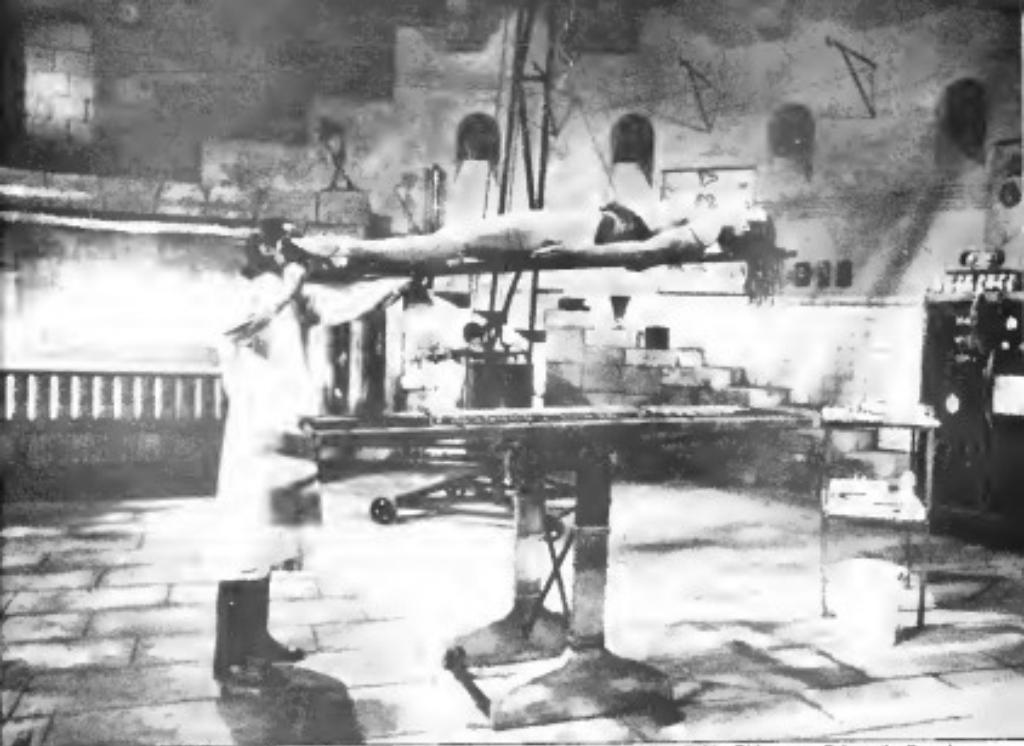
—Paul Rose —

### 2nd Post Mortem

Warhol's *FRANKENSTEIN* was produced in the Robert V. Bernier Arch Oboler Spacevision 3-D process. For this reason, SF fans may want to go see the film. There aren't many 3-D books made any more, and if you've never seen one, it's probably worth the torture you'll endure sifting through the vulgar plot just to see the 3-D effects.

Spacevision was developed by Robert V. Bernier in association with veteran IWANAYA DEVILS 3-D producer Arch Oboler at a cost of \$750,000. From all available evidence, the only two previous Spacevision productions were *THE BUGGLE* and *ARIGATO*. *THE BUGGLE* was released in 1965 and later in 1972 (thru Sherpix, the people who released *The Seward*)—it didn't do too well in both releases. *ARIGATO* was filmed in Japan ("Angato" means "stink you" in Japanese) and yet to be released in the U.S.

Spacevision uses a twin-component prism-lens system to place left and right eye views one-over-the-other on a single 35mm film. A



Med lab time with Udo Kier (Dr. Frankenstein) administering special "treatment" to Delila Di Lazzeri. Below: the Baron's creature, played by Sedjan Zelenotic.

similar lens is used in projection, except that each view is polarized in a different direction (66 degrees with respect to one another) to allow the viewer to use the standard polarized glasses to get the depth effect. Those 3-D films made with a process employing polarized light must be projected onto a metallic screen. For this reason, the distribution of *FRANKENSTEIN* will be somewhat restricted, since many theaters—especially the newer twin-theaters—don't have metallic screens.

THE BUBBLE had good dimension on cinematography. *FRANKENSTEIN* doesn't. Berner was 3-D consultant on both films, so we have only to assume that the makers of *FRANKENSTEIN* knew it themselves. They did.

In the "version" of Mary Shelley's classic, Dr. Frankenstein creates two monsters—one male, one female—with the intention of mating them to produce a new, superior race. The male monster, according to the good Doctor, must be lascivious. Since all the male monster tasks is a head, the Doctor and his assistant Otto wait outside a bordello until a good specimen comes along; they then hook off his head and trundle it back to the lab.

Unbeknownst to Dr. Frankenstein, he has accidentally severed the head of a would-be monk. Consequently, the experiment fails. That's the story. Oh, there's all sorts of

"wholesome" stuff: sex with the dead, rippling out stitches and squishing organs, tape after making an incision with a knife, severed limbs by the dozen. Indeed, this movie is so grossque it makes *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT* look like Walt Disney stuff.

Director/writer Paul Morrissey's intent is evidently to make a buck, and he probably will. To coin a name from a previous Washit film, *FRANKENSTEIN* is trash. But, then, what else can be expected from the protégé of a man who signed Campbell's soup cans on canvas and convinced everybody it was art?

—Lyle Kessler —

#### CREDITS

A Pontypool/Entergy/Raisman Production. Distributed by Brynston Pictures [80 min.]. 3-D/Color. Rated X.

Directed & written by Paul Morrissey. Photography: Luigi Kaveller. Prod. design: Enrico Gianni. Make-up: John De Carlo. Music: Claudio Giacci. An RCA film. Story by Carlo Rambaldi, based on Roberto Aronoff. Baron Frankenstein: Udo Kier. Baron's wife: Monique van Vugten. Field Hand: Joe Castiglione. Farmer: Sedjan Zelenotic. Girl zombies: Delila Di Lazzeri. Baron's assistant: Arno Juenging. Also: Lio Bonito, Carla Mancini, Marco Lazzari.





Dominique Darrell falls prey to Count Dracula who is soon disappointed to learn that she is not a virgin.



Count Dracula (Udo Kier) comes to the grim realization that his latest victim, Stefano Cassini, is also not a virgin. His desperation heightens: no one seems to be a virgin any more!

#### ANDY WARHOL'S DRACULA

Need we mention that Andy Warhol's DRACULA makes vampires look even more erotic than is customary? In this Gothic farce, the bloodsucking Count (Udo Kier) dry-humps his victims even as he drains them. But only "virgins" can slake his thirst; so he packs up his coffin and heads for Italy, where the influence of "Holy Mother Church" will hopefully assure an abundance of unmarried maidens.

In deference to the film's X rating, however, Dracula finds himself in a madcap household whose marriageable daughters are all either lesbians or nymphos. What follows is a breezy and

rollicking horror movie satire, graced with lush photography and lavish production values.

Paul Morrissey's direction is schematically straightforward; he relies so heavily on close-ups that the flutter of an eyelash almost stirs the breeze in the theater. Music enhances characterization: a Slavonic rhapsody denoting the title protagonist; a rinky-dink piano rag for lusty leading man Joe D'Antonio, and a soubion of Bartok for the final chore scene. The period is the Twenties; central Europe relaxing between world wars; tuxedo-clad men with their oily hair slicked right down to their skulls; girls in frilly white organdy dresses and

fuzzy coiffures hot off the curling iron.

Even better than the ambience, however, is the priceless hokey dialogue, delivered in fractured English by an international cast of incompetents. Udo Kier is the most stylistically consistent Dracula yet; a woebegone soul so broadly romantic, he might have strayed in from a road company of "Werther." His valet is Arno Juering, who addresses his lines to the camera as often as not, and gives a performance that looks like a warm-up act at the Continental Baths. Maxine McKendry, as the grande dame, comes on with a bare-brained hauteur which suggests Betty Ford doing a turn as Lady Murgatroyd.

And, as the "hired hand," there's Joe D'Allesandro, whose superstited status is underlined by the coy positioning of a log in the scene where he splits kindling. Joe is asked to mouth all manner of trendy, cliché revolutionary slogans; in his terminology, vampires are just another breed of social parasite. And one must admit that the spectacle of a dyspeptic Dracula vomiting blood is certainly decadent, though hardly bourgeois.

—Paul Roen —

#### A 2nd VIEW

The squeamish and faint-of-heart may find Andy Warhol's *DRACULA* a bloodletting orgy that's hard to take. Loosely based on the *DRACULA* legend, the Warhol touch adds camp and sex, of course,

thus the old bloodsucker craves blood from virgins only, who seem to be in short supply even in an Italy of some 46 years ago. That hideous he creates in a household of young daughters is the basis for this plot, and there is quite a bit of it. About 45 minutes into the film, the gore begins, and it's served up in generous helpings—blood isn't short supply. There's no 3-D here, but the look of the film is rich and beautiful. Director Morra gets better with every effort and here he even comes a good performance out of Warhol regular Joe D'Allesandro as the gardener who beds the daughters and finally does Dracula in.

There are cameo appearances from directors Renzo Giallongo and the late Vittorio De Sica. Claudio Giuli has composed an effective moody score, and the production values are truly excellent

—Sy Kłoppar —

#### SYNOPSIS & CREDITS

Udo Kier is a youngish Dracula in the late 20's. He leaves his Transylvanian home to search for a wife and settles in Italy, where he rents a house next to Vittorio De Sica, who happens to have four daughters. Dracula, who can only drink the blood of a virgin, has quite a time finding a neat one even in a Catholic country, and the daughters are no exception since they are being tormented by De Sica's gardener Joe D'Allesandro. Finally we see Dracula and his wretched henchman, Shadrak, torturing D'Allesandro after the virgin hunt. De Sica and De Sica literally cuts him to pieces before sinking his fangs through the heart in a horrific classic. The eldest daughter, who has also become a vamp, is smitten on the same spot.

A Post-U-Bergen/Rossini Production. (Bryarman Pictures).—105 min.—Color, written and directed by Paul Morrissey. Starring Udo Kier, Joe D'Allesandro, Alfonso Giordano, Vittorio De Sica, Maurine McKeedy, Stefano Calvano, Dominique Cottrez, Melina Vukovic, Silvia Chiarissimo, Renzo Polasta.



**SPOTLIGHTING ED PARKER  
AN UNKNOWN  
MONSTER  
STAR**



So you think you know your monster movies? You've seen hundreds of them and you know all your horror performers from Ansel to Zucco, right? Well, if that's true, then this should be an easy Monster Trivia question for you:

Who played Dr. Frankenstein's creation in SON OF FRANKENSTEIN — GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN — and FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN?

If you think the roles were portrayed by Boris Karloff, Lon Chaney Jr. and Bela Lugosi respectively, you're absolutely correct—except that when a scene called for strenuous and possibly dangerous action, the stars were replaced by a very special actor/stuntman in the firms named above, plus many more in the years to follow.

The man being referred to—though remaining virtually unknown to the day—is Edwin Parker. Not only did he substitute in scenes for many great horror stars, but he also brought original monster characters to the screen. At the conclusion of SON OF FRANKENSTEIN, it was not Karloff who was pushed into the fiery sulphur pit by Dr. Frankenstein (Basil Rathbone), but Edwin Parker in GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN, when it came time to film the scene where the Monster is trapped in the exploding lab, it was



Parker who stepped in for Chaney Jr.

But Parker's most extreme portrayal of Mary Shelley's creature came with the production of FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN. In the very first shot of the Monster, when Chaney Jr. discovers him encased in ice in a glacier cave, Parker's features are clearly visible through the makeup, not Lugosi's. In strenuous lifting scenes when the Monster carries the hunchback, Parker replaced Lugosi who was then in delicate health. Again, in the lab scene at the film's climax, it's Parker who gets strapped on the operating table, and who stepped in for Lugosi for most of the fight action between the Monster and the Wolf Man.

Parker even portrayed Frankenstein's creation in a bit for a comedy film with Olsen and Johnson entitled HELLzapOPPIN'. So, in fact, Edwin Parker played the Frankenstein Monster four times in his career, which is more than either Boris Karloff or Glenn Strange did.

Parker matched this feat by appearing as the Mummy in four different films. When the script called for the Mummy to go up in flames or disappear beneath a swamp, Parker was ushered in to do the honors for Lon Chaney Jr. in THE MUMMY'S TOMB, THE



Ed Park, unheralded Hero of the Horrors, seen in some of his famous doubling roles. Above: subbing for Lon Chaney Jr. in THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN (note also another pro stuntman's special body control while taking a tumble from the Monster). Parker also doubled (below) for Arthur Franz in MONSTER ON THE CAMPUS. Opposite page: 18 Parker, doubling for Karloff, is about to accost Bud Abbott in A&C MEET DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE.





MUMMY'S GHOST and in THE MUMMY'S CURSE. In the latter, Universal's last entry in the series, Parker actually had more screen time than Chaney because of Lon's disastrous faction with the role. The last Mummy job essayed by Parker—though not actually part of the "true" series—was in ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET THE MUMMY (1955). Wonder of wonders, Parker actually received screen credit for his work in this one.

Ous to his capabilities as a stuntman, Parker was much sought after to perform in serials during the late Thirties and Forties. Among many others he took this hell, did the tumbles and handled the rough work in THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SATURN AND ROBIN — KING OF THE ROCKET MEN — and in serials he doubled for Buster Crabbe in FLASH GORDON — FLASH GORDON'S TRIP TO MARS — FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE, and BUCK ROGERS.

Another one of Parker's notable movie performances was in ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET DR. JEKYLL & MR. HYDE. Since most of the time Mr. Hyde's scenes show him dashing madly from the scene of a crime or jumping from rooftop to rooftop, it was Parker who doubled for Karloff in most of the "native" Hyde sequences. Parker also doubled for Arthur Franz in MONSTER ON THE CAMPUS, a story about a professor who accidentally turns himself into a primitive cave man.

In the 1950's, Parker added to his screen repertory three unique and original monster characters: *THIS ISLAND EARTH*, when the scientists were called upon to save the dying planet of Metura, one of the terrors they encountered was the limbering brain-heavy, insectlike Mutant, portrayed by the indescribable Edwin Parker.

In TARANTULA, Parker's role was that of Leo G. Carroll's lab assistant who exper-

iments with a serum that turns him into a hideous creature afflicted by the symptoms of a disease called ectomogly.

Parker was also one of the giant mole-like slaves in a lost subterranean Sumatran city, ruled by abominis in THE MOLE PEOPLE. Thirteen years after he doubled for Bela Lugosi in FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN, Parker performed similar chores in BRIDE OF THE MONSTER. In the course of the story, Lugosi is unwittingly transformed into a super-human creature by his monstrous steward, Lobo (Tor Johnson). The ensuing battle has Parker — in Lugosi's role — pitted against the gorgonius Lobo.

Over the years, Edwin Parker made many a horror film more exciting and interesting with daring stunts which the stars were unable to perform and by also creating original monster characterizations—with his untimely death in 1967 from a heart attack.

— Vincent Baussey —



Opposite page: In perhaps the only major role that was solely his own, Ed Park is the Mummy in *A&C MEET THE MUMMY*. On both sides, Bud and Lou pause from Ed's claws and all have good gauze to worry. Above — seeming to have cornered the brain-trust market, Parker (as the Mutant) hassles Rex Reason and Faith Domergue in *THIS ISLAND EARTH*. Below — as a mole man, killing off poor Nestor Paiva in *THE MOLE MEN*.



# PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE





Opposite: Paul Williams is Swan, evil genius, owner-entrepreneur of The Paradise, the ultimate rock palace  
Above: The Phantom (William Finley)



Paul Williams contemplated his scratch and smile, scratched down to his chair, and considered the question. "Is pop music taking a romantic turn?"

Paul replied: "I can't relate to the rest of the music business, but I know what my audience is thinking. And they know what it is to be lonely or to love someone so much it hurts."

This goes a long way to explain the theme of a long line of Paul Williams songs, ranging from "We're Only Just Begun" to "Never To Be Around," the title from the film CINDERELLA LIBERTY (nominated for an Academy Award), and now—for multi-awarded recompenses for PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE. His music, for that reason, however, includes some tunes he probably wouldn't have written otherwise. Paul said:

"In our literature, there are a lot of stories about people who have sold their souls to the devil, such as 'Faust,' 'The Picture of Dorian Gray,' and 'The Devil and Daniel Webster,' and so on.

"In PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE, the hero is a rock concert promoter who has made a deal with the devil. In return for his soul, he won't ever age; his concerts will all be sell-outs. A lot of the action takes place around the concert hall."

To get the right incantations, PHANTOM's actors and crews have spazzed the continent.

"There's an old movie theater in Dallas that was just right for the concert scenes," Paul noted. During the interview, his stay in New York was to do a short interview show in an old barn of a theater on 17th Street, plus some downtown cabaret scenes.

PHANTOM is just the biggest parting in Paul's new direction for his career. "I'm totally committed to film," he said, and, while it won't stop him from writing and performing, the medium will certainly take up more of his time. His songs for PHANTOM include four that aren't normally his big. These are the ones written for the concert segments—Alice Cooper songs, as he calls them.

"Funny—Alice and I are very good friends. But musically we're way apart."

His comments about Nelson Riddle arrangements (he loves them) brought about a couple of insights on the way Paul works as a writer. The question came up as to whether he could read music:

"Just barely," he replied. And the setting in his dug-out at the Phara State (the very one that was used in Nat Simco play of the same name) tended to bear that out.

Paul had rented a Fender-Rhodes electric piano and had it set up in one of the bedrooms.

"I can play a tune on the piano and have a copyist write it down over the telephone, it's a very easy way to work."

Film work has brought him in contact with a lot of people he can respect. For example, Brian DePalma (Sister) who wrote and directed PHANTOM, has been dubbed as one of the best of the new breed, and he's pleased to have in his film George Menken of Mean Streets fame.

The man behind the camera is British Larry Peizer—"That's Piccadilly," Paul noted, pronouncing the 't' the way the British do—"zed."

Acting is actually Paul's first love. Many may have forgotten, but Paul's first notable film stint was in THE LOVED ONE, in the role of a precentor. 17-year-old who looks around with scientific research and model jet rockets. He was already 22 at the time, but his potential baby-face and stature made him ideal for the part. His current involvement with films started when he was looking for a way to relax after a particularly grueling tour.

"I thought I'd do a little of what I like best—hang around a movie set for awhile. And then I found myself in the makeup chair three hours a day for the last 'Apes' movie, THE BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES."



Opp. page: the Phantom at the console composing his original music for the Paradise's gala opening. Inserts—top: Beef (Gerrit Graham) is the glitter-rock star who is troubled by the Paradise's eerie events; he's also troubled by being turned down in the Miss America Pageant. Bottom: Paul Williams, either reminding one a little of Winston Churchill or Dr. Jekyll. Above: the Phantom enjoying a new "high" at the rock balance.



Beef (Graham) is worried, all dolled up in curlers and thinks someone's out to spook him for a change. Uh, oh—the dear thing has just lost an eye-lash. *Inset:* Paul Williams in a diabolical situation about to do something evil—perhaps even nasty.

Paul's next film will be *ARTHUR AMONG THE ANIMALS*, which deals with a time in the life of a veterinarian. But there was yet other business to be gotten out of the way first—a swing around the college concert circuit, and appearances with Lisa Modell, including three weeks in Las Vegas. He's signed the bill with Lisa before, and he holds her in high esteem.

"She's a lady and loaded with talent. A really gifted lady. We worked together at the Greek Theater—that's the big gig in Los Angeles—and the audience couldn't get enough."

He had teamed up with NBC's *THE MAGICIAN* to do three films, which may not have been completely absorbed by the cancellation of that excellent show, since Paul claimed, "Bill Bixby and I have a production deal together to do one movie a year."

His personal life has taken a happy new turn. A year ago, there was a divorce in the past and, speaking about it, his voice took on the most serious tone of our conversation. But the present is different.

"Right now, I'm an uncurmored man. But there is a lady; she's wonderful. She makes it very easy to stay home."

But staying home isn't all that easy, what with film work and touring. And besides, too-

ing cuts down on his song writing. He has, however, come up with enough new material to fill a new album for A & M entitled, "Inspiration." He packed out a little Craig cassette recorder and slipped in a cartridge. The strains of "You and Me Against the World" came out, and they suggested that Paul has lost neither his writing touch nor his romantic bent.

The writer concluded, Paul went back to his armchair and wrote. He was in fixed daze and spangled T-shirt, with "Aloha" glittering across his tummy which seemed more tan.

"Yup—42 pounds. How'd it happen? Well, there was an awful lot of broiled chicken and fish. And I eat down on the drinking too. Now, if I take a bath in mashed potatoes, it's back to cottage cheese the next day. And if I have a few drinks one night, I'll go without for a couple of days."

It was now getting time to say goodbye, and Paul turned photo-optional for a moment.

"You know—on the day my album will be released, I'll be 33 & 1/3 years old. If that isn't an omen, I don't know what."

—Allen Macrae

## PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE —Synopsis and credits

Rock record mogul Swan (Paul Williams) runs Club Paradise (symbolized by a dead bird) and it's about to open the ultimate rock establishment, the Paradise. He uses the music of names like Window Leech (William Finley), where he tries to help out a young Window, Window's friend Sam the Warehouseman, who part of his band is forced in a record press, to entice them for slanting. His beloved Phoenix (Jessica Harper), Window—now dressed as a sheath—agrees to complete his vision on the "Phants" legend for Swan. However, Swan uses Phoenix as a backup singer for gay Beef (Donald O'Connor), whose guitar rock act drives the audience away from the club. When Window Swan Beef to drown on stage, Phoenix goes down and is an immediate hit, soon becoming Swan's mistress as Window leaves. He's sold his soul to Swan, who in turn has sold his soul to the devil. Saving Phoenix from being assassinated on live TV as she's wild to Swan, the Phantom causes both his and Swan's deaths.

CREDITS  
20th Century-Fox (SI. Minutes). Color. Written and dir. by Brian DePalma; produced by Edward R. Pressman. Photog. Larry Litan. Music: Paul Williams. Additional music: George Allison. Editors: Spd. by Greg Foster. Starring: Paul Williams, William Finley, Jessica Harper, George Memmoli, Gerrit Graham, Jeffery Combs, Archie Hahn, Harry O'Brien, Gene Gross, Henry Clavet, Ken Carpenter, Sam Forney, and others.

# YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN





*Although all of his films (starting off with his first one, a simple 3-minute cartoon titled *THE CRITIC*, which won a Special Award) have been critically acclaimed, have earned him huge cult followings and the reputation among many esteemed critics who think he is the greatest comedy genius around, Mel Brooks really didn't start to hit the jackpot until *BLAZING SADDLES* came out last year.*

*Brooks' latest, *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*, looks even bigger at the box office, and one estimate given is that it grossed in 1975 as much as *LOVE STORY*.*

When he was a lad, he says, he was too short, too slow and too weak to keep up with peer group of jocks and future felons on their own terms. So he became their court jester and mascot, launching his career in comedy as an act of self-preservation.

"And pretty soon," Mel added, "I came to hate them all. I really hated them for what they made me be. Inside every funny man there is a sanguine side wondering if it is safe to step outside. In fact, the frustration of being a funny man is that it is so difficult for that serious man to let himself be seen."

Brooks is a marvelous and unpredictable clown. On first meeting him a couple of years ago, he said apologetically, "I'm sorry if I seem a little depressed, but I'm just getting over what could have been a really magnificient cold."

Still, Brooks utters in exasperation when strangers clasp him on the back, tell him jokes he doesn't want to hear, and presume that he is wholly and solely the clown 24 hours a day.

The comedian rises the same kind of public pest as the screen tough guy, forever being challenged by amateurs. The movie stars are only rarer; the major annoyance is to be taken less seriously than you should be.

"After all," Mel says, "I expect to have a strenuous death. I would like to have had a strenuous life."

He had moved from survival comedy to professional comedy inadvertently. Mel was working as a drummer in the house band at a Catskill resort when the "star" comic got sick. Brooks knew the dreadful routine by heart— "I just flew in from Chicago and, boy, are my arms tired"—and took over. But he learned a lesson when he brought the house down with a dyi impersonation of the hotel manager, a hysterical legend in his own time.

The lesson was that the best humor comes truth with it, and it's something Mel has never forgotten, although he has also learned to keep it in perspective.

"I know comedy. It's my job and I'm a good craftsman. I'm a laugh maker and there aren't many of us around. There certainly aren't many of us making movies any more. Wayne Allen, Elaine May, me. Few, few, few. Too few."

Blissful scene: the Monster (Peter Boyle) and the Bride (Madeline Kahn). Marty Feldman (below) as Igor, who knows how to back up his hunch.



"And the laughs have to be there. If they aren't, nothing else helps, and nothing else matters."

Mel Brooks spent several years as one of the writers on the variously titled *Stil Caesar* shows, wacky comedy (invariably, considering our plastic times, all of it was done live) with brilliantly mixed sightgag, nonsense, parody and close observation of our flaws and foibles. Later Mel cofathered one of TV's greatest situation comedies, *GET SMART*. Mel admits, "It paid the rent for five years."

Brooks' feature film debut, *THE PRODUCERS*, won him an Oscar for best original script in 1968 and is now a cult classic. It cost only about \$380,000 but has not yet started turning a profit. Brooks states:

"Jon Lurie keeps telling me it will be in the black any time now. Still and all, he lets me do it and do it my way, and he lets me have first cut. I can't complain."

His second film, *THE TWELVE CHAIRS*, was even less successful commercially, although Mel loves it and although it too now enjoys a cult following. But until *BLAZING SADDLES* came along earlier last year, Mel claims he was reduced to doing the *Jeffrey Carson Show* for the money rather than the exposure.

What made him eager to do *BLAZING SADDLES*, which had originated under other auspices as "Black Bart," was—Mel insists—the possibility of cutting a movie in a time when Howard Johnson only had "one flavor."

He did not expect it to fail but he never expected the enormous success of *BLAZING SADDLES*.

"But it came in the middle of a drought, with audiences screaming for escapist stuff, and there we were."

Mel feels that *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* really is a homage to the movies, a homage rendered with impeccable fidelity by Brooks and his collaborator, Gene Wilder. The improbable glimpse of the dastardly uncle of Frankenstein sitting atop its very own pinnacles, the cobwebby intention, the music at once eerie and carry, the specific borrowings (such as the hoards from *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*) all bespeak a loving familiarity with the objects of their affection.

And although *BLAZING SADDLES* had a start-to-finish coherence, it is needed to play as a mimic of romances which worked brilliantly or not at all. *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* is similarly uneven with night pugs (featuring Marty Feldman's drooping eyes), old jokes and slapstick—but the thick plays much more as a warm and congenial piece, the whole greater than the sum of the parts. It gets madder where *BLAZING SADDLES* goes, and it has an encroaching tone of sarcasm and antipathetic where *SADDLES* was abrasive and aggressive.

Serious messages are not what *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* is about, as Mel is quick to admit, yet he has no doubt that it is more than a series of period jokes.

"The monster is what people who are afraid of intelligence think intelligence would look like if it were a person."



Marty Feldman, as Igor the playful hunchback, meets Freddie Frankenstein (Gene Wilder).

Notwithstanding the fact that it is a no-holds-barred parody, YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN continues to carry on the basic "message" that has been the embodiment of its predecessors: it reflects the old dream man has had of immortality, which itself reflects a wish for God-like powers. Not the least of all, the story is a commentary on intolerance and red action. The messages are not passed, of course, but they are there.

—Bob Ceder

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#### A SECOND VIEW

The times are now so depressing that audiences will laugh practically anywhere in search for laughs, or even in search of Bentley Murphy (remember?). Consequently, Mel Brooks' YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN will suck up millions in profits, as many of the pre-adolescent audience believe. And, why not? It has Brooks' signature "way up top," Gene Wilder's presence, and . . . a successful name that has been used more times than any in film history: FRANKENSTEIN! We must have with admit to prejudice by feeling immediately delighted that made of only a year, the FRANKENSTEIN name has been used in these tremendous productions, each one a colossal hit — NBC's 6-hour FRANKENSTEIN,

THE TRUE STORY — Andy Warhol's FRANKENSTEIN — and, now, the Mel Brooks version. (At last, we are avenged!)

Much better than BLAZING SADDLES —although still overshadowed by Brooks' best film, THE PRODUCERS — YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN excels on various levels. It's an 80-minute movie right page, one-liner and a load of situation comedy. The trouble is that most of such banananas in moments lack development and seem all thought out or virtually extrapolations—as if devised between takes. From all this, there are about six or seven rather good sequences at best, and several of the finest get quickly used up around 12 minutes into the film.

Dr. Frankenstein (Gene Wilder)—an Arsenic descendant of the famed family, the czar of a Baltimore mad "college"—is quick to establish his embarrasment over his immortal name by correcting his class over the pronunciation; it's not "Frankenstein," he points out; it's Fruthenreinstein!"

An old family retainer comes all the way from Europe to inform Wilder that he's now the heir to the old Castle of Frankenstein. Fortune and estate in Transylvania. Upon Wilder's arrival, the train pulls up to his stop and Wilder asks a shoddy boy:

"Findin' me, boy—on the Transylvanian Station," The kid says, "Yes, truck

49." Wilder. "Well, then, you can give me a share!"

No, that's not one of the better bits, though typical of most. As Wilder gets off the train, the station seems strangely desolate . . . except for a weirdly garbed leeky hunchback (excellently played by Marty Feldman), who greets Wilder:

"Dr. Frankenstein?"

"Fruthenreinstein," Wilder corrects.

"I'm eye-gore," Feldman replies.

"You mean Igor."

"No, Eye-gore," Marty asserts.

Noting Marty's sharp disagreement with compassion, Wilder taps the hump (it gives off a neat sharp tap on each tap), and charitably informs him, "You know, I happen to be a brilliant doctor and can correct your hump!"

There's a beautifully timed pregnant pause; Feldman groans broadly, rattling his huge protruding eyeballs, and says, "What!—hump?" Another pregnant pause and subtle double-take.

Next, Marty motions to Wilder to follow him from the station. Holding on to a tiny, crooked walking stick, Marty walks down several steps and says, "Walk this way," then hands the little cane to Wilder, who also leans on it, evoking Marty's hobble-walk. Marty beams approvingly, "That's right—walk this



way?" Wilder hobbles on with the little cane, doing another double-take. Since this sequence is mostly visual, it has to be seen to be believed. It's well done, and we are a few others, unfortunately, they're not that many. And, in fact, the above may be the film's best gag.

The overall mood, whether humorous or straight, is, of course, usual, though rests the film's strength...despite the fact that I think a better comedy could have been created by, say, intelligently editing a number of old MUNSTER or ADDAMS FAMILY shows into one feature film.

The visuals though are good, often great. Brooks definitely adheres to the fine traditional style of the old Universal, the treatment is reverential and sentimental and, thankfully, nearly totally devoid of some of BLAZING SAUSAGE'S tastelessness. Lighting, camerawork and general production values are excellent. Brooks wanted to crack to quantum high standards that he even enlisted 77-year-old Kenneth Stotzschken (who did all the effects and lab sets for the 1931 FRANKENSTEIN) to recreate the original Universal mad-lab mystique. Combined with

nostalgic black-and-white photography, the sets and overall effect is quite stunning.

None of the players are open to criticism, except for vagid and rather plain-looking Ten Guri (allegedly the flick's cute chick), and Kenneth More, whose Loral Avril out-armed inspector takeoff (from SON OF FRANKENSTEIN) is almost ruined by a bad dialect impression that's poorly written and overlong. But there is the welcome presence of Peter Boyle, in the best Monster satire situation since A&C MEET FRANK\*, and Madeline Kahn (as Dr. T's flounce) who's abducted by the Boyle Monster—she undergoes a major facelift and develops an Elv Lasher-BRIDE hairstyle complete with white streaks. Coms Leachman (in an evil Judith Anderson makeup good enough to make her double for JAGUBU) takes off on Maria Guzenkapa, playing a violin to calm down the Monster. Gene Hackman does an astounding guesstouch on a takeoff on the blind hermit in BRIDE—he makeup and the set is faithful to the original, but that's where the similarity ends (the Monster's thumb is burnt and scalding soup is spilled on him by blind hermit Hackman).





Opposite page: Igor (Marty Feldman) makes a perfect choice at the local brain bank. Later, Dr. Frankenstein (Wilder) asks him, "What kind of brain?" Igor answers that it was "Abie Normal's!" Insert: Teri Carr as Igor. Kenneth Sennckfadden (who devised the original mad lab set-up for the 1931 *FRANKENSTEIN*) recreates a proper setting for Dr. Frankenstein (Wilder) who's about to give life to his creation (Peter Boyle), in the above scene. Insert: Cloris Leachman, in a grand Judith Anderson takeoff, plays the sinister Frau Blucher. Below: Blind Hermit Gene Hackman pours scalding soup on Monster Boyle's lap.



The peculiar thing about Brooks' *FRANKENSTEIN* is that there's a big tendency to begin suspending criticism as you re-examine it on reexamination — not to fault it for its failings (which seem to shrink in the distance) but to admire the whole thing because of what Mel Brooks and his crew have accomplished. Such ambivalence is hardly unusual in the light of current, average film fare. Today, filmmaking may verge from a few productions of fair to top excellence to a mind-boggling quantity of carbon-copy, brain-numbing horrors — what they're good, they're very, very good, and when bad, simply horrid. In other words, there's an awesome gap between

garbage and quality — whether conditions of the times are at fault (which they are), or it's because of pressure brought about by high-cost-per-hour birds, fact is that satisfying films have been fewer the last few years.

Brooks' *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* is very satisfying. Enough said.

— Cal Beck —

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**YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**—cast & credits: Director, Mel Brooks; prod., Michael Grusin; screenplay, Mel Brooks, Gene Wilder, score, John Morris, music, William Tutsky; exec. prod., Henry Miller; hat Mizar, Dr. Frankenstein, Gene Wilder, Minister Peter

Boris Igart, Marty Feldman, Elizabeth Madl, Miss Kan, Frau Blucher, Clark Leuchnow, Ingels, Tom Gamm, Inspector Kram, Kenneth More, Arnold Fanck, Michael Hayes, Billie Holiday, Genevieve Ward, Oliver, Lori Davis, Oscar Basay, Dorothy Griffith, Lou Coste, Anna Beasley, Arthur Metz.

#### PLOT-IN-SUM:

On being informed her heir to the Frankenstein estate in Transylvania, Freddie Frankenstein (Brooks) goes to take possession hoping to restore honor to the disreputable family name. After meeting by chance his grandfather Igor, or "Mad Scientist" (Feldman), he arrives at Castle Frankenstein and meets his mother Frau Blucher (Leuchnow). The house is infested with plague. Freddie, telling him he cannot escape his ancestor's "foibles," Igor (Gamm) assures him they have a word. Transylvanian tulipet played on a violin, and track it down to a strange hidden study where they find a violin and a burning cigar but no person, but Freddie does discover his grandfather's secret note detailing the mysteries of life and death.<sup>1</sup> This triggers off a search in him, and now Freddie decides to do what the original Dr. F. did to create life.

Once he gets all the vital body parts together, only a brain is now needed. Igor is sent by Freddie to find one in a nearby medical center, but the little hunchbacked panacea, drooping the jar with the "good" brain, constituting it with one labeled, "Abnormal man—Do Not Use!"

The Monster (Boyle) is finally created complete with scars and...<sup>2</sup>

After some initial setbacks, the scientist is disbanded; meanwhile Blucher (Leuchnow) is seen to Freddie that she and his grandfather, Victor Frankenstein, had been lovers and that the first Monster was really their joint creation — she also confesses she smokes cigars. Freddie decides not to destroy the Monster upon reading reports of the man whose brain was removed that he was capable of affection and romance after his rebirth. He is welcomed. Freddie succeeds winning over the Monster thru affection, and they establish a friendship. After a little rehearsing, Freddie believes he's now ready to show the world his successful creation. He and the Monster make a public appearance on stage dressed in top hat and tails, performing "Putting On The Ritz"—all singing, all dancing. The Monster's composure goes during the performance, however, and the audience begins tearing appetites at him. Horrified, he's sick on the rampage. Inspector Kram (Mans) and the villagers are after him. Elizabeth has been carried off by the Monster who "has" her — seven times! — and Elizabeth's terror changes to ecstasy. Though teeth are locked together in remorse, the Monster gets up and leaves abruptly on hearing a Transylvanian lullaby — in Elizabeth's dreams.

Lured by the Lullaby back to the castle, the Monster is also sick on the operating table. Freddy has a brain storm: the only way to save the ailing son (David Hemmings) is by changing the Monster's character by transferring part of Freddy's qualities into him.

Just as the Inspector and mixed villagers break into the castle, and ready to tear everything apart, the Monster and wife magically split him into two separate halves. The things have turned out all right, the villagers leave, convinced that Freddy is a "good guy" and that the Monster means it when he says that all he wants to do in life from hereon is to be a swell fellow and inspire affection.

Which he does, since not only has the Monster changed during the transformation-festivities, he's also passed on his own love-making strength to Freddy!





Cos, pius, worn, grot and obvious homages paid to a key scene from the original 1931 *FRANKENSTEIN*. Above: the unrepentant villagers about to tear the mad scientist to the big elements. "About to tear the poor ass!" cackles. Below is a scene of special historical and even hysterical significance: it's the scene where Wilder and the Royal Monarchs do their thing, dancing, joking in "Plating on the side"—this shot also shows Marty Feldman who never appeared in the final screen scene. Come to think of it, neither did any of the CoF stars... but, wait until you see *MIDDLEAGED FRANKENSTEIN II*!

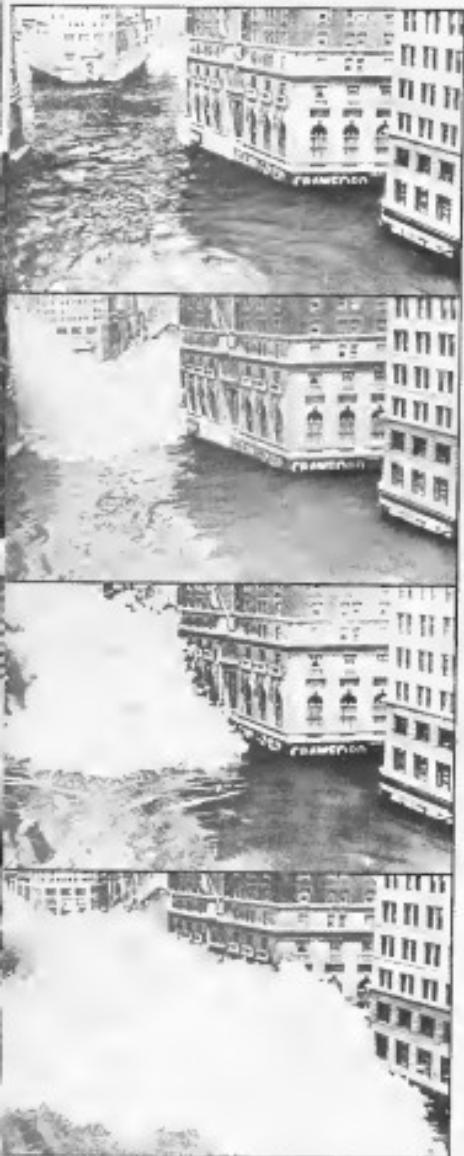


# the genius of



# george pal





At 69 years of age George Pal has been a solid SFantast for most of his colorfully active and productive life. Some of today's greatest animators and names in the film industry, such as Ray Harryhausen, have been associated with him. Pal's SFantasy film reputation is now legendary, backed by over 38 years of puppeteering and animation experience that started in his native Hungary. In 1940 he went to Hollywood and started producing the now classic "Puppetoons" which won him in 1943 a Special Academy Award for "the development of novel methods and techniques." Later he produced many outstanding feature films, among them such classics as *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS* and *THE TIME MACHINE*.

This exclusive interview with George Pal was created especially for CoF by Fred von Bezemitz whose own credentials encompass the authorship and editing of "The Mad Magazine Checklist," and as film editor of several Robert Cooney features (*CHAFEO ELBOWS*, *BABO* 73, etc.) plus many other theatrical, industrial and TV films.

\* \* \* \* \*

This interview took place during *ImaginArte*, Rochester's Festival of World Films, which bestowed a special tribute to George Pal. The Festival showed several of Pal's films, including *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS*, *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE*, *THE TIME MACHINE* and *7 FACES OF DR. LAO*. Pal also showed several original 16mm Technicolor print Puppetoons from his personal collection. Prior to screening a 35mm Technicolor print of *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE* (with the spectacular Flooding of Herald Square sequence curiously missing), George Pal was given a plaque honoring his contributions to the film arts by ImaginArte's Gene DePrez (Chairman and Festival Director), Richard Gollin (program chairman) and Peter Cowie (international program consultant). The plaque reads:

"In grateful tribute to GEORGE PAL, film-maker, animator, architect of imagination, who has shown the world to be more terrifying than we imagine and more delightful than we dream, who has given us splendid images of man at the edge of technology, art and ingenuity, reaching to extend his mastery over the universe and swimming in triumph—who in his own way has been that man."

Following some fifteen minutes of introductions by Mésas DePrez, Gollin and Cowie, George Pal thanked his hosts and paid a tribute to the film industry and his millions of fans, concluding with:

"I just arrived here an hour ago and I'm full of presents . . . thank you very much. May I add just one thing: being a born Hungarian—of course, I am an American and very proud of it—there are two Hungarians who are on the Film Festival that I would like to plug. First there is Miklós Jancsó, who has made a Hungarian picture which is compared with *WAR AND PEACE*, and the other one is Ernő Kónya, and he was a good friend—I knew him. Thank you very much."

Following the screenings, George Pal talked with CoF on a variety of subjects . . .

#### WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

New York gradually disappears under a deluge. The world is about to end. Depicted below is Gothenburg's Herald Square area. Building at left is now Kornell's Dept. store; to the right, also Crawford's, is the McAlpin Hotel, site of many SFantasy conventions.



A scene from one of George Pal's PUPPETOONS.

CoF: When you began your career in films, how did you happen to choose the "special-effects" field?

PAL: Well, I have to go really way back, where it started, because my whole family—my father, mother, grandmother, grandfather and uncles and aunts—they were all on the stage or one form or another in Budapest. And of course I was rebelling. I didn't want to be an actor or a singer or a piano-player, so I decided to become an architect. I did graduate as an architect but when I got my diploma there was no work in Hungary for an architect. Consequently, I started to do something else. I drew pretty good and started to make animated cartoons, but pretty soon these cartoons weren't enough—it was too flat for me, so I devised a technique which I called "Puppetoons," which basically has the same principle as a cartoon except that instead of making a drawing I made a puppet and shot one frame and changed the puppet's head and shot another frame.

You see, the Puppetoon technique is basically this: for instance, if you say "Yes," that takes probably nine differ-

ent heads—one, the mouth is closed, the next one, it's a little bit more open, the next more and more and more, and so on. But it's very time-consuming, you take this head and put it on the puppet and shoot one frame, then you take that head off and you put another head on and shoot another frame and once you repeat this procedure 24 times you have exactly one second of film.

CoF: How did you get the technique so that it was usable at all? The patience and the time consumed must have been exhausting!

PAL: Well, I had very patient people who worked with me.

CoF: Have you been able to speed this process up in any way?

PAL: No, it's really hand-made film, just like cartoons are hand-made. Paramount had brought me out to this country, thank God, and I made lots of Puppetoon for them, but after a while it wasn't enough to make these shorts. I wanted to do live-action pictures and wanted to use my experience in special-effects and stop-motion and things like that. My first live-action picture was... actually

I made two films together—THE GREAT RUPERT with Jimmy Durante, who still thinks that's his best picture, but unfortunately it wasn't quite as successful as others—and DESTINATION MOON.

CoF: Back on the Puppetoons, when you were changing the heads, for instance, how did you make sure that they were each aligned properly?

PAL: We had all kinds of registration pins which were the stabilizing factors.

CoF: How about the one with the truck that flew through the air—how did you keep it from swinging?

PAL: Well, there are wires, but the wires are registered, so it's very much controlled. The wire, naturally, you don't see.

CoF: How about in THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, where you can't see the wires at all, like in the scenes where the machines are moving out of the pits?

PAL: Well, there is so much smoke and other things going on in a scene like that. There is something interesting there, that is DESTINATION MOON we had a gamble—the lights and the inside of the



A rare shot — on the set of DESTINATION MOON with George Pal.

spaceship all turned together with the camera, the whole set and the camera turned together. The actors did sometimes wear wires, but everybody's looking for vertical wires; you don't realize that the camera was sideways and the wires are horizontal. ... no one looks for horizontal wires!

*CoF*: Have the techniques involving wires like that changed much over the years?

*PAL*: Yes, the wires are much better than they used to be, we used to have to use piano wire. The materials have changed for the better but the techniques are the same. Of course, there have been many improvements in back-projection and front-projection, too, and many things that make it much easier today than even twenty years ago. The new "fast" film is wonderful, too—we can shoot practically in normal room light.

*CoF*: How many Puppetoons were you able to make each year?

*PAL*: We had a kind of schedule: six weeks of preparation, six weeks of shooting, six weeks of post-production ... something like that, but it was staggered. We made about six or seven a year. Six, I think, was the most. Usually we made only three or four. Altogether, counting the ones I made in Europe, I've made about 200 Puppetoons. We made something like 40 for Paramount.

*CoF*: Was there any studio control over them?

*PAL*: No, it was just economics—it cost between \$15,000 to \$30,000 to make each one. And later they became more

expensive, the costs kept going higher and higher, and the income was the same. I don't think theatres pay any more even today than they did 35/40 years ago for a short. They just drove us out of business, the attitude of the theatres and the attitude of the unions who meantime wanted higher and higher prices and we just couldn't cope with it. So we made the last one in 1947.

*CoF*: Does Paramount still own the Puppetoons?

*PAL*: No, an outfit in Los Angeles, they bought them from Paramount some years ago—National Telefilm Associates.

*CoF*: It was so good to see the audience reacting to the Puppetoons that were shown here at Imaginations. The kids were laughing, the audience response was so real, so spontaneous and so nice to see after all these years.

*PAL*: Yes, and they seemed to respond to the same spots that they responded to 30 years ago. Except a few spots they responded more than they used to.

*CoF*: How did you come to do the TOOL BOX Puppetoon in 1971?

*PAL*: Chuck Jones asked me if I would do something for his TV show "The Curiosity Shop." We decided to do TOOL BOX as a ballet without any faces. We had lots of discussions as to whether we should put faces on the tools and give expressions, and I thought, well, let's let the "behavior" of the tools determine which one is the boy-tool and which one the girl-tool, and what they do, what their characteristics are, and etc., and you can do it. I think we proved it, didn't

we? Those were real tools, not puppets!

*CoF*: Yes, we think it was a really beautiful film. Were you ever interested in working with Walt Disney?

*PAL*: We were very good friends, and he asked me many times to come over and I just didn't feel like it at the time—probably I should have.

*CoF*: What did he want you to work on?

*PAL*: There was nothing in particular—he was like any major studio, he said work on anything you want, science-fiction, whatever. I had 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA, but Paramount wouldn't make it, they would say, who the hell is interested in an old submarine, you know? You see, after DESTINATION MOON, I wanted to go back that way instead of the future, and I had it and Paramount said "No!" They said, make an "atomic submarine" film, I said no, I'm interested in 20,000 LEAGUES. I worked about two weeks with a writer trying to make an atomic submarine story and I gave up. And then Disney called me, Walt Disney himself, and just to tell you how nice a person he was, he said: "George, there's somebody here with the rights to 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA and I recall that you were interested in it—I won't buy it unless you tell me that you are not going to do it." I told him, "God bless you, Walt, go ahead and do it because Paramount won't make it." And he did the same film that we had. The only difference was that he spent about \$4-million on it and my budget was \$1-million—and still Para-

mount wouldn't make it? Isn't that idiotic, though? And Disney's film was very good. He told me that he had a sequence with the octopus that he didn't like, the way it turned out, and he redid it at a cost of \$400,000 extra! That's the kind of person he was. He didn't mind spending the extra money to do it right. Of course he had the money to do it, but he felt it should be done right.

*CoF* Some people have been spreading stories that Disney was a money grabber.

**PAL:** Not at all, just the opposite, in my experience anyway. He was always trying to do what he thought was the best. When I came over just with a bag of puppets from Europe, I got acquainted with him and he helped me all the time. I didn't know very much then and needed all the help I could get. He was very unselfish. Many people today are telling some bad stories about Walt, but I can't tell a bad story about him... I'm sorry, but he was really nice, a wonderful person.

*CoF* It's just possible that Walt Disney's experience back in the 1920's, where Walter Lantz had grabbed the Oswald Rabbit character away from him, had so hardened Disney to being sure that he owned all the rights to anything he produced that he gave off an acquisitive impression, thus may have later prompted stories of his fanatical protectiveness.

**PAL:** Well, I was really nobody at that time; I just had these Puppets that I had started to make and he was interested all the time. Either I called him or he called me to say, "Let's have lunch."

And we would have lunch. He was smoking like a chimney and I would say, "Why do you smoke so much, Walt?" But he kept on smoking, and that was unfortunately his downfall. He was practically a chain-smoker.

*CoF* We know that you worked with Ray Harryhausen in the early days of the *Puppetoons*. Were you very close with him?

**PAL:** Oh, yes, we worked together for many years on the *Puppetoons*, and we're still close friends. We've always wanted to work again, but somehow never made it. I have something that we should do together, then I find out he is busy, and if he has something, I am busy, so...

*CoF* Did you ever work with Lester Sill?

**PAL:** Just a very short time, just before he passed away, on a couple of *Puppetoons* in the 1940's.

*CoF* And Walt Chang and Gene Warren? You worked with them on several features?

**PAL:** Oh yes, *THE TIME MACHINE* and several others. Gene Warren has a little studio and I think he merged with Cascade now. And Walt Chang... I think he's making educational films now.

*CoF* Since you've spent so much of your career on special effects, spectacular visual and science-fiction, how do you feel about people like Stanley Kubrick and Douglas Trumbull who just dive in, never having made a film like that before, and become super-successful with a futuristic film?

**PAL:** I feel the more the merrier! I think it's wonderful, especially Kubrick who is one of the very greatest talents

of the motion picture business... I feel very good about it.

*CoF* Of course, Kubrick obviously has a boundless imagination, but does it boil down simply to the money angle—that if you have enough money, the producer or director can just have all the people he needs to do whatever he is not experienced in?

**PAL:** Yes, an actually 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY was a very expensive film. I think he really got acquainted with special effects through that picture, and he learned a great deal.

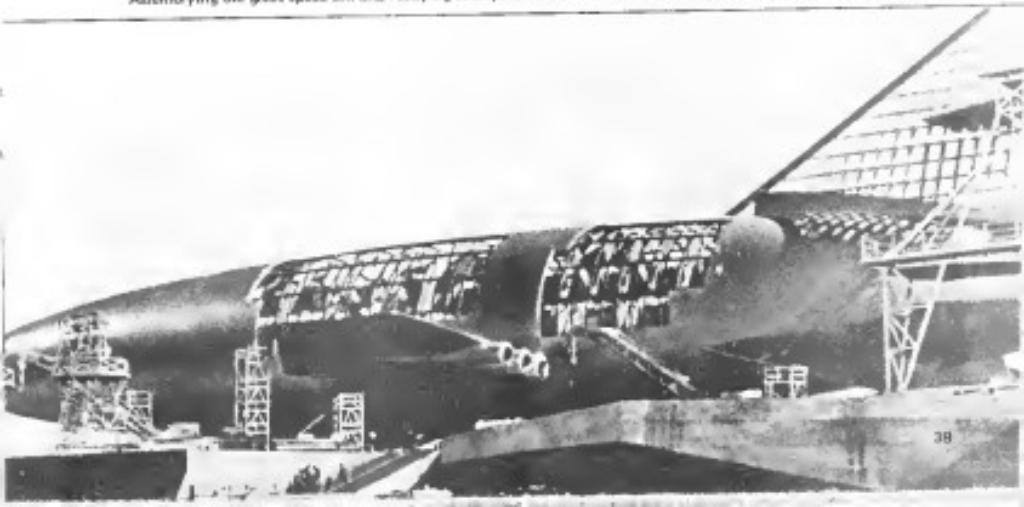
*CoF* Seeing it 20 years later, *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE* seems very stiff and motionless, there's very little camera movement. Even given the setting, I guess we're used to more "visits" now. The steady shot, held, gradually began to amuse the audience at *Imaginations*.

**PAL:** Actually, you could take this picture and improve it tremendously just by re-cutting the timing of it. It's just that taste changes so much, now somebody says something and the music goes "Viscousness".

*CoF* In the last shot of *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE*, the pan away from the space ship to the landscape, I thought I saw things that looked like artificial constructions, remnants of another civilization. Was this intended?

**PAL:** Well, not really. We wanted to do a sequel, there is a sequel, *AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE*. I convinced Paramount that we should make it, but it just never materialized. Actually, the sequel is almost as good as the original. But that last shot was just for size, a "dum-dum" shot, it's not supposed to

Assembling the great space ark and readying to depart from a doomed Earth in *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE*.





#### WAR OF THE WORLDS.

PAL: Yes, he had a contract with them; it was either Mate or John Farrow.

CoF: How about Chesley Bonestell, do you ever see him?

PAL: Oh, he's still working; he must be in his 80s. He's still very active.

CoF: Can you tell us anything about *THE CONQUEST OF SPACE*? We all know it turned our heads. Were you forced to add a love interest to it, or what?

PAL: Well, it's just—how can I put it—one of those things... once in a while you get cornered and nothing works out at all.

CoF: That was your last film at Paramount?

PAL: Yes, and that was one of the reasons, among others.

CoF: In *THE TIME MACHINE*, you changed the character of Weena from what she was in the book—she became a very voluptuous girl...

PAL: Ha, ha—that wasn't bad, was it? I'll tell you what happened there. We shot certain things with Yvette Mimieux which were rather candid, and that was her first film, you know, and the scenes that we shot at the beginning which were supposed to be at the end of the story we had to re-shoot when the film was over because she had

been in the film because we had a better sequence for the end. Somebody was supposed to go out and test the atmosphere: will it work or will it not, like in the book. But we put in this shot to show what the landscape is going to look like, just made a quick sketch and photographed it. And the studio was so anxious to preview the picture that they showed it with that dummy shot. Well, the preview was very successful, unfortunately, and they said, "No, forget it, ship it—it's good enough!"—and we were heartbroken because we wanted to make a very suspenseful ending to it and have the cast walk out into a very beautiful miniature of that painting, but what were we going to do? It was a very good preview. Of course, this was 22 years ago and it didn't look as bad then as it looks today.

CoF: Were there any sequences shot for the film that were left out?

PAL: No, this is the way it was originally.

CoF: And it was a project that Cecil B. DeMille had considered?

PAL: Yes, in 1934 he had Paramount buy the property, but he never got into it any further. In fact, I made two of

his pictures. DeMille had also bought *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS* originally. And this is funny—I remember it was the third day of shooting, when suddenly the head of the legal department comes in and says, "George, we have to stop production—we don't own the copyrights to the book!" But, fortunately, the H.G. Wells Estate was very kind and said they would give us the permission.

CoF: *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE* has such clean surfaces, so much polish in the visuals. Is that a studio style or was it Marc's choice or Bonestell's?

PAL: Partly, yes. That was actually my first "studio" film. I had made *THE GREAT RUPERT* and *DESTINATION MOON* independently, back-to-back, while *WORLDS COLLIDE* was done for Paramount and certain studio polishers do show up, I think, since some of their own people worked with me on the film. I wasn't really sure how studios worked; I was a kind of babe-in-the-woods, and so I went along with them on which way this or that should be done.

CoF: Did they assign Rudolph Maté to you, then?



Yvette Mimieux and Rod Taylor in *THE TIME MACHINE*.

Right: Dr. Lao (Tony Randall) confers with George Pal on the set of *7 FACES OF DR. LAO*. Bottom: Spaceman in *DESTINATION MOON*. Below: Woena (Yvette Mimieux) sweeps away by a doting Morlock. Proving more fox and weenies go great together.





Rod Taylor overcomes fuel, traffic and runaway problems by zooming off in his super invention in **THE TIME MACHINE**.

It was very beautiful... I can just see Rod Taylor and Yvette Mimieux, just the two of them there, go in there where the crabs are and the ocean is flat and doesn't move any more and the sun is hot all the time. I think we could have developed a very interesting story of the loneliness of these two people.

*CoF:* Is there any possibility that this could still happen?

**PAL:** The trouble is just like with *AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE*, which a very, very good book, where somehow or other we just never made it. We also entertained the idea to make a sequel to *DR. LAO*. We had one good core of a story that has Dr. Lao going behind the Iron Curtain. A good story there, but just blocked out. And it was good since it had political significance at the same time, and social significance.

*CoF:* How do you feel about making films with social or political statements?

**PAL:** Well, practically any film has something to say, every good film at least. I'm sure that *THE TIME MACHINE* had a lot to say, but I don't think people realize it; you don't hit them with a club.

It had a lot to say about a man who was born into the wrong century and he wasn't happy about it; he was a man who hated war and wanted to know if we would discontinued it. And *DR. LAO* had something to say: Dr. Lao came to town and he changed every person in town. Good films have something to say. I don't know yet how audiences will react to *DOC SAVAGE*, but I'm quite certain it will have something to say. And actually science-fiction films probably have, on an average, more to say than any other type of fiction.

*CoF:* Was Tony Randall your choice for *DR. LAO*?

**PAL:** No, I wanted Peter Sellers but MGM had Randall under contract which made Sellers' price \$50,000 more than for Randall. The studio was adamant and I lost.

*CoF:* Perhaps we all did. Actually, I thought that Randall was superb in the seven roles, but considering the fact that, in New York City at least, *DR. LAO* had minimal distribution—I saw it for the first time here at Imaginations—I would think that Sellers' name would have

allowed the picture more play and it could have made much more money, more than compensating for the extra \$50,000.

**PAL:** Yes, and all of my pictures have made a profit at the boxoffice—some more than others—except for *DR. LAO*.

But even that came so close that the sale to TV put it into the "profit" column. *CoF:* That is really incredible! With your track record, the studios still give you a hard time on financing! Something is really wrong with the present system if losers can keep turning out films and people like you can't.

**PAL:** It is sad, but we can only keep trying.

\* \* \*

(To be concluded in the next issue. In Part Two, George Pal boimes back with *DOC SAVAGE*.)

# KOLCHAK: The Night Stalker

How the TV show is surviving; and  
a chat with Darren McGavin.

Plus: second big feature. An interview  
with the original Night Stalker  
Barry (VAMPIRE) Atwater.





Above: Simon Oakland as Vincenzo, editor-in-chief of a major Chicago daily, lecturing Carl Kolchak (Darren McGavin).

## KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER —

How It's Surviving, plus a Chat with DARREN McGAVIN . . .

**KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER** may very well have survived last season's upheaval because it is a horror series that tries to be a little humorous. And don't confuse its attempts at comedy with "camp."

"Camp" has become a popular pursuit in recent years, spoofing nostalgia with a straight and innocent face. But in **KOLCHAK**, there is a deliberate effort not to take the chills too seriously, perhaps a safeguard against anti-violence reactionaries.

Whatever the reasoning, horror stories have vast audience, particularly on college campuses. SFantasy flicks on late-night TV draw good ratings. It therefore seemed logical to ABC-TV programmers last summer to offer a series featuring a monster-of-the-week on Friday night in the final hour of prime-time—from 10 to 11 p.m.

When the original **NIGHT STALKER** was shown several seasons ago, it drew one of the highest ratings of any movie ever made for TV. The show seemed to have a built-in following going into the new season. But the early returns in September indicated the following was small. In its first weeks, **KOLCHAK** was doing poorly in the ratings; it was a combination of various factors which were at fault.

Darren McGavin (who also owns a chunk of the action) said the network

was partially to blame because it didn't want to give up air time to promote the show. Darren said:

"They didn't want to give up valuable prime-time minutes to promote the show. They were more interested in selling commercial air time."

But there were other problems. The 10-11 spot on Friday night has never been the most popular time slot in prime-time. In fact, it has been more of a death row, or, as Darren preferred to call it, "It's the armpit of the world. Everybody dies in that hour, on all networks."

Daren's point is quite valid. Rarely has a show been successful in that period, although "Police Woman" has been holding on with acceptable ratings on NBC. CBS long ago gave up and in recent years has relegated 9-11 on Fridays to feature films, usually in butchered-up shape.

To compound **KOLCHAK**'s problem at the start of the season, ABC came up with an ineffective schedule for Fridays. "Kodak," starting off the night, proved to be a contagious disaster. Its poor ratings early in the evenings affected later shows. "Texas Wheedler" lasted only four weeks; "The Six Million Dollar Man," a hit the previous season, was suffering from poor ratings, and **KOLCHAK**—at the tail end of the night—took the worst licking of all. Something started happening though, and **KOLCHAK**'s ratings have been going steadily upward.

This increase in audience interest saved the series from mid-season cancella-

tion. Now, the network feels it will do even better leading off Friday nights at 8, although the competition gets rougher. NBC's "Sanford and Son" and "Chico" combine for the highest rated hour on TV during the week. CBS is now coming in with a new series Fridays at 8, an Oriental detective show titled KHAN, replacing **PLANET OF THE APES**.

"We're not going to make any major changes for the new time period," Darren revealed. "We talked about it, but feel we're doing well with our audiences now. Young people enjoy the fun and games."

Daren continued:

"**KOLCHAK** isn't really a pure horror show, although it deals with man-killing monsters and creatures every week. You can't do a 'horror show' on network time. They (the networks) don't want to scare people out of their pants. The networks' attitude is a sort of coacessation to pressure groups."

"It's interesting what's happening between networks, pressure groups and the FCC. The networks are always concerned about being accused of excessive violence and influencing children. So what we try to do is keep the suspense, and at the same time I try to stay funny. Hopefully, we will have more humor now because we'll be out at an earlier time. But, of course, that depends on the writing."

Scripts, according to McGavin, are a major problem. There are times, he disclosed, when production on some episodes is done from scripts as soon as they



come off the mimeograph machines—while the ink is still wet.

"We're not like other action-dramas. You can dust off old scripts and feed them to other shows, but you can't rewrite an old 'Cannon' for us as you can for 'Mannix,' 'Barnaby Jones' or 'Harry O.'"

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE NIGHT STALKER IS ALIVE AND LIVING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

An Interview with the star of the  
Original NIGHT STALKER,  
Barry Atwater

As a veteran actor who had already racked up a considerable record in numerous films and TV dramas, Barry Atwater suddenly achieved overnight fame as The Vampire Who Threatened to Destroy Las Vegas in the first and original *THE NIGHT STALKER*. In this special CoF interview, created by Richard E. Wert, Jr., Barry Atwater ventures deep behind-the-scenes concerning the creation of *STALKER*—first, more importantly, he also reveals himself as a very articulate and highly aware individual with a very sensitive and sensible insight about Showbiz, acting as a career and about the world around him.

CoF: Do you remember the first big break that brought you into film?

BA: Yes—I worked on a student film at UCLA. The film got an Academy Award and the right notoriety; the buzz around the Award was enough to get me an agent and some parts. I couldn't act my way out of a paper bag at the time, but it didn't matter. CoF: Did they approach you for *THE NIGHT STALKER* with you specifically in mind?

BA: I'm not sure how that came about. Someone may have suggested me to Dan ("Dark Shadows") Carlin. I think he looked up my pictures in the Academy directory. He



The original *NIGHT STALKER*: Barry Atwater (left) as the vampire who terrorized Las Vegas. Above: Carol Lynley and Darren McGavin.

was interested and called up my agent. I went to the studio, I brought some pictures with me and he looked at one shot I brought and he said, "That's it! That's the one!"

CoF: How did you feel about doing *NIGHT STALKER*? Was it hard for you to enter into the mood of playing a fiend, a vampire?

BA: No, not at all. We all have all sorts of feelings inside us everybody. All we have to do is simply let go and the feeling comes out. That's what acting's about—just letting go, not suppressing or repressing or criticizing or censoring ourselves.

CoF: How did you go about preparing for your role as James Skorley, the vampire? Did you stand in front of the mirror and decide on which facial expressions would be suitable?

BA: No, I can't control that. It just happens.

CoF: How did you feel about interpreting, about getting into the character?

BA: I felt he was very lonely. He has no

friends. He's all alone, so he doesn't talk to people. I'm sure he's not a happy man, but he's stuck. He's like a hermit soldier; he's stuck. And I took that attitude. I've never taken heroes and never intend to, but what I heard about it is that a guy has to have it. If Skorley didn't have blood, what would happen to him? It must be really hell not to have blood. So, I simply took the absolute necessity to have blood, and if I have to kill people, I'm "sorry." I don't want to kill anyone. I don't get kicks by killing people. I simply have to have it. And if people don't understand it, it's not my fault—and they chase me and they do awful things to me and they shoot bullets at me and I'm furious with them.

CoF: Do you regret not having any speaking lines?

BA: No, I was very glad—very, very glad there were no speaking lines. Because I think as soon as the vampire opens his mouth and starts to talk, he becomes an ordinary human



being an actor saying silly lines. And I think that was a brilliant idea of them not to have the vampires say a word.

CoF: Was all of the filming and growing overwhelming?

BA: No, this is what happened: Sometimes when they shoot they use an Amflex camera which makes a lot of noise; it's a hand-held camera. In the end, where the sunlight comes in and I try to go up the stairs and the sunlight hits me and finally I fall, and Koltchak kills me with a stake—all that was shot with an Amflex which made a terrible racket. So, all the noises had to be dubbed. We went into an adjacent sound stage and I tried to go through the business to make it as convincing as possible with the hearing and the growling and the snarling to cover that sequence where they were using the noisy Amflex camera.

CoF: You were the *star* of the most successful made-for-TV movie. To what do you attribute your personal effectiveness in *THE NIGHT STALKER*?

BA: That's due to the way it was photographed and the way it was cut. I'm not trying to give false modesty. I think if you like films it's important for you to know what it is in the film that makes you like it, so you can appreciate it all the more. There are a lot of things to watch in the film aside from the actors. You watch the way the shot's done—how it's cut, the camera angle. Those are the things in a film that can really be exciting as film. The way it was cut and edited together. In *THE NIGHT STALKER* you would be watching scene A and hearing the dialogue and sound from scene A. As you get to the end of that, we would suddenly hear the sound from scene B—the visual would switch to scene B. This kind of overlapping—it would pull us through, rather than jerk, jerk, jerk like that. It would kind of ease us through into the next sequence and make the pacing go very much faster. It's a neat technique and it's exciting to watch. It feels good to watch.

CoF: Could you describe the general makeup they used on you?

BA: The eyebrows—little tiny scissors were used to cut off all the hair underneath here and then a lot of goop was put on them and they were brought out and pinned up on the ends. Full, complete contact lenses were used for the bloodied part. There's a "furry" Mooshies and a "heavy" blood-shot set, so there were new sets of contact lenses, and then the fangs and then a wig with black hair.

CoF: How was that sequence filmed where you ran that run out the window on an upper floor?

BA: That was shot in the administration building of the Sam Goldwyn Studios and they replaced the windows and used sugar for glass. They can make a pane out of sugar. It breaks, but it doesn't have very sharp, needle-like fractures. And they erected on the ground below a giant big air pillow. It must have been maybe six feet high. It was inflated with blowers. And then the stuntman inside took a running jump, dove through the window and tumbled and tumbled and landed as he fell three stories onto the cushion below. The window you see from the inside of the build-

ing was on a set. The outside was another building altogether.

CoF: Do you think it made a statement about society when the police forced Koltchak to get out of town?

BA: Sure it did, and it's a statement that I think most of us believe as being certainly possible. It's a weird thing. I just read a book called "Centennial" about the year 1876 and about the big centennial exposition in Philadelphia. And it was the second term of Ulysses S. Grant, who was a very inept man—had no business ever being president. And the corruption was so thick throughout the whole government that it made me think, "Well... Washington's really nothing now. Why should we be so easily upright about it? It's been going on for at least a hundred years, or probably before that." But we want to believe the best of ourselves and the best of our country—about George Washington and the cherry tree and all that sort of stuff. So, when it does happen we're always sort of shocked and horrified. And yet, in *THE NIGHT STALKER*, with that undercurrent of corruption, it really didn't surprise us a heck of a lot.

CoF: I know *THE NIGHT STALKER* was a very serious drama, but between takes did you like to break the tension with some humor?

BA: No, not especially. I don't hang around on the set. If it's a comedy picture I will, because it keeps up the fun ambience. But if it's a serious drama and I start to hang around or someone else starts to hang around, then this is bad, because it breaks the mood. You really have to keep that going, because it's very unusual and it can slip away if you're not careful. You have to really concentrate before you go into the act to take your place, you walk from the dressing room to the set, and I have to say to myself, where am I, what am I doing—because I've gotten out of it. So I have to walk back into it. What do I need, what do I want, what values do I have, what do I care about, what do I dislike, what do I admire, hate, respect, and so on. The whole inside has to go.

CoF: If they re-made DRACULA and did it according to the book, do you have any ambition to portray the famous Count, the ultimate Vampire?

BA: No way, no way. Look, DRACULA was written in 1897. That style of presentation of a story is old hat for us now. We really know it's a classic when we see it. In the recent version with Paley, we've had it—we've really had it. So, we cannot go and keep doing that over and over and over again. Here's what happened: take THE EXORCIST—you see, that's where we are now—where DRACULA was when it came out with Lugosi in the early 30's, it scared the heck out of us, and so did the first FRANKENSTEIN. Now, today in 1974, it's THE EXORCIST that's scaring people and making them sick. We cannot go back from the lead of THE EXORCIST in terms of story, of treatment, of action and honesty and candor. We're doing things, saying things and we're admitting things that we never did before. We are far more honest and candid a people than we ever were. I remember when *sea* movies started showing in theaters I couldn't believe it, because I was

brought up in Denver, Colorado in a very square, Republican, Protestant society. And all this stuff was where you wouldn't even think about it, much less talk about it. But we knew about it. Now we're all saying out loud what we're thinking in our heads. And I think this is marvelous. I think we're being honest and I think when we're honest we'll be healthy. When we start lying, then we get sick.

CoF: What advice would you give to someone who wants to become an actor, and would you recommend the profession?

BA: No. If you want to become an actor, nothing in God's will can keep you from becoming an actor. Nobody can accomplish that you be or not be. If you want to, you will be. You cannot help yourself. You will be, because you must be. You must be... or die. It occurred to me not long ago that acting is really an athletic activity and it wouldn't be far out to have acting as part of the Olympics because an actor really uses his body. You have to move. You have to feel. And I think one of the reasons athletes can make very good actors is because they already know how to move. They already know how to respond physically. If you can't do it physically you do it with words, but the words stand for a physical action. If I say, "Come here," what I'm really wanting to do is reach out and grab you and pull you here. So, I've simply used the words in place of an action, but I mean that action inside me when I say the words, and that's what turns it on—the meaning, the intention, I mean it... all of me means it.

CoF: Do you ever feel the urge to write, direct and produce a film on your own?

BA: Yes, I would like to do that. That's a very exciting medium. It's the most exciting for me. Kenneth Clark said in his CIVILIZATION that he felt that the most culturally representative aspect of this century would be the motion picture rather than architecture.

CoF: Do you ever think of the degree of immortality you achieve by having yourself recorded on film?

BA: What good does it do? When I'm dead,

*THE NIGHT STALKER* made the above statement in Los Angeles, a little over two years after the first unofficial documentary report of his death was made public. So, Koltchak... beware!

Interviewed by Richard E. West, Jr.



# STAR GAZING



A STAR TREK Album— George Takei (left) and Nichelle Nichols (right). Below: Leonard Nimoy, William Shatner and James Doohan.



Do-Forrest Kellley (left) and Walter Koenig (right). STAR TREK's spectacular syndicated success has made its rebirth certain: Gene Roddenberry has just lately announced a feature film version in the works and a new TV series is practically inevitable for around late 1986.





Carol Ohmart stars as Lila, one of the bizarre characters of Poe's phantasmagoric world in **SPECTRE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE**. Mohn Quandour wrote, produced and directed this Cintel Films presentation, originally intended for release by the now defunct Cinerama Releasing company but now being readied for distribution under American-International.



THE TOWERING INFERNO: Rescue helicopter and a breeches buoy are used to rescue people trapped by a catastrophic holocaust in the world's tallest skyscraper. Left: An explosion interrupts a battle between Richard Chamberlain and two hotel guests in a fight to commandeer the cable buoy.





ABC-TV's Wide World Special: **THE WEREWOLF OF WOODSTOCK** — he sold his howl for rock 'n' grout.

# FRANKENSTEIN at large

The following reviews are not necessarily CAF's final opinion or evaluation and, exceptively in the case of "Short Takes," do not preclude other assessments that may appear in forthcoming issues on the same title.

## TELEVISION—1973-74

"Television reviewing is completely insane," says film critic Andrew Sarris, adding, "What television criticism is an exciting new area to explore because of its power to change our minds."

But who's to argue? Most TV movies are only superficial reworkings of the same material in apparently endless variations, a favorite being a family, or group of people setting out in a car, and arriving at an isolated area for a confrontation with an unknown menace. (MAN-EATER, TERROR ON THE BEACH)

People have been inspired everywhere from elevators to islands (KILLER ISLAND) to lunar modules (HUSTON, WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM). Clockwork commercials arrive at predictable intervals, forcing writers to distort their material to fit the format of the medium.

22,000 injuries and fatalities a year are traced to fluorescent propellants in aerosol spray cans; health heads say TV along with high salt content cat food may well cause kidney infections and usually death in most cats. Not content with the mere depiction of rape (CRY RAPe), maiming and torture (SWEET & SHOCKING), MURDER AND THE COMPUTER, television is now actually killing parts and people in their homes.

The ethics of this behavior were examined in "The Killer Instinct," (1/22/73) the debut of David Wolper's PRIMAL MAN series for ABC. Staged footage of primitive man was filmed in the Malibu Desert and then intercut with contemporary Starfawn studies in aggression. John Chisholm, of PLANET OF THE APES, devised the Standardized Homo Erectus makeup for a tribe headed by novelist actor James Prosek. Alexander Scourby narrated. The second is the series, "The Battle for Dominais" (1/7/74), contrasted today's ferment associated with primitive remnants based on Huay Morgan's controversial book, "The Descent of Woman." A haunting scene of a panther stalking a beach, driving the tribe into water, stirred necessary churrumbras and produced a cinematic poetry untagged by Raquel Welch of *Barbarella*.

Fires. Show more than three, "The Struggle for Survival," (6/21/74) consisted of footage retrieved from a tragic March 13 engine crash in which Prosek, his son Robert and 24 other PRIMAL MAN cast and crew members died. The scenes of the past revealed through Prosek's artful name and the stage of

PRIMAL MAN'S specious time machine, re-alignment techniques has been equaled only by NBC's fiasco of the bengal lion. Friday 10:30 and the two-year quest through Brazil for the Karen Akrore Indians chronicled in the 1970 British documentary, THE TRIBE THAT HIDES FROM MAN, repeated frequently on PBS.

The season's other premiere peak was a "Hallmark Hall of Fame" adaptation of Mary Norton's children's book, THE BORROWERS (1/24/73), repeated 12/74), the story of an eight-year-old boy (David Lanzo) visiting a Victorian country house where he discovers a tiny family, six inches high, living under the kitchen floorboards. With superb special effects and potent fantasy situations, it generated a response from both children and adults, perhaps the best kind of "children's fantasy." Avoiding the broad acting approach indigenous to Sid and Marty Krofft productions and other Saturday morning fare, the cameras seemed more akin to Richard Matheson. A vicious, snarling fiend stalks through passageways inside the walls where a manicule Eddie Albert makes a last ditch stand to defend his household. The family escapes through a window grating to begin an awesome odyssey toward a new home, a scene with all the mystic portent of INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MEN'S Erato.

Billie Putnam, a Hallmark PR spokesman, says they have "never relinquished program control to a network or a producer. Good, bad or somewhere in between, whatever goes on the screen exemplifies Hallmark involvement from idea to script to production to distribution to time period selection." In addition, they are practically unique in scheduling the advertising so it doesn't interfere with story.

Brian Moore's CATHOLICS (11/29/73) is set in a future time when monks on a strand off the coast of Ireland have come in conflict with the church for saying Mass in Latin—self-filling pregnancy, perhaps, for identical situations were reported on TV news in only a matter of weeks after the airing of this highly peacock speculative drama. Catholic theologians debating THE EXORCIST turned up on several shows, most notably ABC's Sunday morning DIRECTIONS (2/17/74). And, in this context, we might also note that NBC's Sunday-morn INSIGHT series of religious dramas has often employed fantasy and science fiction along with some fascinating outbeat casting.

Biblical inquiry was also part of NBC's IN SEARCH OF ANCIENT ASTRONAUTS. Considering the mass public interest in this subject, the thrust was stronger this time. The half-skeptical questions raised by Rod Serling's narration were replaced with flat statements of fact. Bantam's pb on *"In Search of Ancient Mysteries,"* \$1.50 by producer

Landsburg shows the fruits of much research going on only superficially on tv, and of includes a *Star Trek* intro for *UFO*.

WILD SCIENCE (4/26/74), with Peter Falk as an outer-space scientist, is another folk tale, beasts and the psychotherapy abilities of Uri Geller and others. So far, tv apparently hasn't got the courage to take on any serious examination of the claim by Geller and Dr. Andrew Phelan that Geller can contact with extraterrestrials from the planet Homo somewhere out in the vacuum. (See Pukasch's "Um," Doubleday and Co., May, 1974.)

The intensity of the fall 1973 UFO flap and the evidence supported the Pan-agonia, Mississippi encounter with floating creatures spawned lots of science-fiction talk show discussions (DICK VAN DYKE, DAVID SUSSKIND and MERV GRiffin) and coverage on NBC NIGHTLY NEWS. NBC's interest appeared more amateurish, less cool, and the network was, in fact, much more intrigued than the audience ever was. Affiliates around the country were said to obey all local UFO rules in NYC. In October, 1973, executive producer Fred Fried, a science-fiction Frame-wearer set a budget of \$30,000 for an NBC WHITE PAPER study of the UFO reports coming in daily. A "Shouter Force" banner over the White House was eventually discarded more generously, and thus emerged a documentary, dredging the aftermath of THE INVADERS and the British series, UCLL, did not appear until December of 1974. After UCLL's DO YOU BELIEVE?, it did present UFO's without ridicule. A Gallup poll (11/29/73) calculated that 51% of the American public believe UFO's "something real." 60,000 UFO sightings have now been collected and categorized. In the U.S., alone there are about 100 sightings a year.

Gene Roddenberry returned—with a vengeance. THE QUESTOR STORIES (1/23/74) and repeated later in the year presented a super-robot (Robert Forster) with super-learning abilities. As acted and written the humor inherent in this characterization is more engaging than *Star Trek* and with levels superior to the wittier "Tutor" than a laconic monologue of THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN, Roddenberry's PLANET EARTH (4/23/74) is a delicate improvement over its precursor, the slow-paced GENESIS II. A series of bizarre grottoes along with many irresistible parallels and spinoffs of STAR TREK as an oddball team of pacifists travel the high-speed subway to a society where men are subservient to all women. "Women's lib or women's lib gone mad?" asks one character. Enter the Kruegs—funny facial tics with napkin ridges on their skulls. They tool around in George Metzger-styled steam cars disrupting matters whenever possible. As an extrapolative satire, a PLANET EARTH





Lee Majors' bionic powers evident in THE \$6 MILLION DOLLAR MAN. Is this an idol of the dreaded god, Chi-Ken-Itzcher?

weakly argues his great potential, those constant voyages of the Enterprise to various planets always seemed "biological" and an obvious usage of available studio sets.

Majors' features also turned up in WONDER WOMAN (3/12/74), an adaptation of psychologist William Marion Monroe's comic book creation, featuring an excellent update and sensible performances by Cathy Lee Crosby. Paradise Island was deftly introduced consistently with its own music, point in fashion and disorderly flavor the KUNG FU Temple scenes. The benefits of matrimony, the "harem," the missile plane, Steve and other references created a feeling of familiarity to the original. Unfortunately, Wonder Woman's costume, which has undergone many minor changes in comic books during the past 35 years, was altered beyond recognition for this television.

ABC NEWS carried a fine-tuned report on the huge rebranding success of *Dai Tsuburaya's ULTRA MAN* in Japan, mentioning that it's "too violent" for American television. It's

available, however, through UA-TV.

#### PLANET OF THE APES (CBS-TV)

Since "excellence" is usually an accidental exception, it was painful to discover but hardly surprising to realize that PLANET OF THE APES (CBS-TV) was as ordinary as some series, if not worse. Dozens of kids we asked, though, loved the APES, makeup, costumes and all—so did many of their parents. Fact is, most homes have 2nd, even 3rd tv sets, leaving adults free to choose other programs if they wish. Thus it's pleasurable that APES was seen by a very vast audience, but since Nielsen's "rating" seems to count few teenagers, this system's efficacy and credibility appears open to question if it has the power to doom popular shows such as APES and, of course, STAR TREK.

KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER has a steady pattern that's predictable but a pleasure. Each script is invested with a sense of cool, calculating humor to balance out its asserted weekly monsters and other horrors.

Kolchak may tick our outrage if he wipes out all existing weirdness and concentrates off the face of the earth; but we're a fuming bunch even if they don't arise from the grave to haunt him, the Sons and Grandsons will. Ouch! And ABC-TV for being the most irresponsible of all TV networks, saving KOLCHAK from poor ratings by shifting its time schedule, doing the same to SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN (whose scripts seem to have improved a bit in the past few weeks) and for offering a heavier diet of other imaginative programs.

—Mervin Fier —

SATAN'S TRIANGLE (20 min., with commercials)—ABC-TV—1975. Scenario: William Read Woodfield, Dr. Stanton Riley. Cast: Kim Novak, Doug McClure, Alejandro Rey, Cohen.

This sometimes spooky, more often stupid TV addition is essentially a haunted house tale which takes place aboard a boat. Kim Novak, looking just fine, is cast as a good time girl tangling with demons and inclement weather on a ghost ship in the Bermuda Triangle. Her fellow voyagers are a thoroughly bad lot: the captain's mystery, the first mate's a drunk who throws his窮uees overboard. Her crusty companion is a "spiritualist" who'd rather roll in a miasma than rescue a priest (Alejandro Rey) who's adrift off the starboard bow. And Kim's SOS only brings a lost-and-found Guardsman, portrayed by Doug McClure. There will be five deaths of these passengers, for this is a moral tale. The Devil's at work here, we can tell by the weird electrical disturbances which cause the film grain to go negative from time to time. In the occasional straight one cannot tell day from night. Or is that the result of sleepy editing and shoot that don't quite match? McClure does a passable job of acting, but Novak and Rey give no better performances than the play disasters. The script is dreary, incoherent blags about material mishaps and religious mysticism. That is the most robust Catholic thriller since THE EXORCIST. Preview of next week's presentation: THE ABDUCTION OF SANT ANNE. Have the Knights of Columbus taken charge of the Tuesday Movie of the Week?

—Paul Rosen —

#### FILMS

#### SOME OF THE ALL-TIME "WORST"

Selected by

Mark Otter

You all remember Mackie Dulens of THE MONKEES, right? He stars in NIGHT OF THE STRANGLER (co-starring with Susan McLoughlin), and if you think he couldn't sing you may be right, and if you say he can't act, you'd be absolutely correct. Mack looks like he wandered on set, someone handed him a script and he said, "Okay, it's a movie script" and he started acting. The other strumpets aren't any better and, perhaps, even worse. The confusing mystery is, who's killing off Mack's family? Could it be his brother (who is a proud Southern gentleman and also beheaded), as it the partner who got fired? Surprise—it's the local Parish priest. He's not truly a man of the cloth, but his brother was (both are black) and wanted to marry Mack's sister, but her bigoted brother was mortally upset that he killed her lover. The local yokel "Look ah, boy" police nab the priest, but not and the entire family, including Mackie, is killed. The audience's shocked...by his beheading. The film was released by Brown, produced by Al Salter, written by



J.J. Milne, and directed by Joy Noland.

**WOMEN AND BLOODY TERROR** (also released, produced and directed by the same people above) isn't a tale about lady vampires nor will you find any pretty things getting chased by apparel-wearing ghosts. In fact, it's not even a horror flick—except in the sense that it is horrific. More in an *SLM* vein, it tells about a bored housewife and her sympathetic urge to harm others. Eventually she does—with her daughter's boy friend, which of course makes her daughter mad. And all the bickering and confusion, enter two noisy garage repairmen who kidnap mom and daughter and proceed to rape them. It's all very smelly, horribly created. You've been warned, so... skip this.

**DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT** aroused a lot of controversy for putting out the story for bad taste and "shocking" audiences. The drama unfolds and tells the tale of a pretty vamp who gets a job at an asylum, but discovers unexplainable events taking place there. While the admen's bad, the script looks any originality whatsoever. And, the artist? Anyone with digital dexterity could achieve better results by having shadow shapes on a wall, including any organdy obscene gestures that may come to mind. Everything in this flick is sophomore, especially the "violence" (which the dear ad men tout) which is so overdone it's funny. For location freaks it was supposedly shot somewhere on Long Island, which doesn't say much for L.I. A major has it that the first director died during filming, watching the fire you can see why. Released by Hallmark, producer, Century 2000, directed by S.F. Browning (Gleaming

### THE NEPTUNE FACTOR goes down on record among The All-Time Worst. Above: blow-up of a small goldie intended to simulate a "fear-monster." Left: Yvette Mimieux and Ernest Borgnine.

William McLean).

**ASYLUM OF SATAN** is an unsupervised, cheap flick that has nothing going for it except for a few gaudy. A girl wakes up in an asylum unaware of how she arrived there, and, of course, no one tells her, so she decides to scoop around. Finally, good Dr. Specter shows up and tells the girl she's there because she had a breakdown. Truth is, she's donkin' foddler for the next Satan. Sacrifice. To the rescue comes her best friend, and the matron of the asylum's only three patients, same Satanic magic and a haunting directive. All turns out well in the end, but only because the girl wasn't a virgin. Specter's about to ravage her beautiful body, when, suddenly, his (incompetent) mind has made him want... "Specter's" next move to fool Father Satan, Dr. Specter and his disciples? Puff. Now, if only the film would go *Puff*. Released by Studio J, produced by J. Patrick Kelly, written and directed by William Girdler. Starring: Charles Messinger, Nick Jolly and Carla Burns.

—Mark Ormer —

**IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE, IT'S SUPERMAN** (2 hrs with commercial, —ABC-TV— Feb 21, 1975).

Anyone who has bought the **SUPERMAN** musical album (from the 1966 Broadway production) might assure that the original stage version closed after a few performances because of opening at the time of a widespread NYC newspaper strike, some thing happened to many other productions each time something like this has occurred. The music is often interesting and, at times, delightful, some of the lyrics are quite bad, but a few (as delineated by those in the original cast album) work well—especially the "mad scientist" bit and songs belted out neatly and with zest by Jack Cassidy. What you never learn by hearing the album is that several neat numbers and a little witty banterologuing are all that coast out of a near-total disaster! Luckily, I

switched channels to see something I'd missed and caught **LEN** (a canning, undemanded little suspense)—it's not hard to see why so many cut it down—it mixed us "tosses of horror" with facets of love instead of blatant violence and hatred, and, for some, this is unforgivable.

Perhaps it sounds unfair to give a show based only on 12 minutes. Comparing notes with others, I found that six out of eight friends switched away after five (10 to 15 minutes, I was hardly alone (the other two). One guy started bawling over a bottle of eye drops and wailed all 2 hours stewed to the gills, the other guy videotaped it for "proof".

Besides David Wilson being the poorest choice possible for old Sage, sets, choreography and overall ambience seemed on a high school or second-rate college level. Also lacking was the original version's theatricality and opening curtain. And... imagination. Hey, whatever happened to it?

—Don Chang —

**THE NEPTUNE FACTOR**, a non-Ton watery so-filler, guakes Ivan Ton's aquatic three-waters seem nerofly great by contrast because Ton's stuff, for one, is a lot shorter. **FACTOR** has the usual line-up of faces appearing these days in disaster/horror/pseudo-SF films. Eric Borgnine, who looks a little too old for tough-guy/teen assignments, Professor Walter Judgeon, as the good old marine scientist, and Ben Gazzara, whose dynamic, adventurous charisma almost makes one believe that the totally plot and direction may yet improve.

Whatever it 20th-Fox ordered the money to produce the thing (and it looks fairly expensive) needs lots of help. As if viewer audiences hasn't been a drag on the market, it's hard getting a rise out of H2O. Developing motivation, conflict and drama from a cast submerged down below in flippers and scuba gear? How about watching re-casts of Lloyd Bridges in **SEA HUNT**... like the man says,

If God had ordained Shakespeare, Kubrick or Devon West to work underwater, He'd have endowed them with fins and gills.

FACTOR's ripoff works several ways. The advertising—the large display posters make you think that huge underwater monsters threaten to chew up sailors all the ships at sea and mankind. Instead, screened are huge blow-ups of small tame fish from a home-type aquarium. Running roughly two hours, the production runs so incredibly dull, you want to gag. As the theme emptied, the audience seemed to be nurturing in irritation—or probably at irritation.

— CTE —

## SFANTASY FILM NEWS

Hope your holidays were happier than those of the victims in **BLACK CHRISTMAS**, a blood-and-gore epic from Canadian Amazeballé films that stars Ken Dalgas as a psychopathic killer. The Yule Season was peppered with other queer gams along the same lines. Box-office bigshot released **THE SINFUL DWARF**, portrayed by Torbin, a nasty case swaddling little fellow, who drags damsels and rents their bodies out to perverted rats.

**TERROR CIRCUS** isn't any more cheering,

with warped Andrew Price of **SIMON, KING OF THE WITCHES** farts farting and douching pretty girls in a radiation-contaminated barn near an abandoned nuclear testing site.

With **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE** now a boxoffice success, we can look forward to **THREE ON A MEATHOOK**, which is advertised as "more brutal than a chainsaw massacre." And, finally, Masters has reached a new low for liveliness with their disgusting shocker, **IT'S ALIVE!**, a charming tale that concerns a monstrous mutated baby who tears his way out of the womb and goes on a blood bunge in search of milk. It stars John Ryan as the distressed papa, with Sharon Farrell, Andrea Dagan, Guy Stockwell, featuring the music of Bernard Herrmann.

Remakes of **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** is the Spanish flick, **THE GHOST GALLEON**, a phantom ship that is found and exploded by three couples who are set upon by the decaying corpus of the dead seamen. The creatures eliminate the women first, then go after the men. Chances is which the sole survivor thinks he has escaped to the safety of the beach as a real cliffie.

And then there are the Black exploitation films in which the trend has turned from crime/detective stories to the house genre; **THE HOUSE ON SKULL MOUNTAIN** is a 20th Century-Fox release of a Cheechako Chip-Parto Production. The dreary film is laced with voodoo and Satanic worship in a house where relatives of the deceased gather for the old familiar reading-of-the-will, only to be disposed of one by one. Then there's **BLACK EXORCIST** which in its advertising warns the audience that the producers are "not responsible to any person that the film may disturb either physically or mentally." Where have we heard that before? And with **BLACKENSTEIN** still awaiting release, we can also look forward to **BLACK THE RIPPER**.

The **EXORCIST** has spawned a host of demon/witchcraft-type films. In addition to the already mentioned **BLACK EXORCIST**,

there is **BLACK MASS** which involves a policeman who seeks retribution for the death of his brother at the hand of a Satanic group. **HELP ME... I'M POSSESSED**, stars Bill Getty. From Italy comes **THE WOMAN EXORCISED** and **THE GOD DEVIL**. Even Walt Disney will get on the bandwagon with **ESCAPE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN**, starring Donald Pleasence, Kim Richards and Ray Milland. Of course, let's not either forget **THE SEXOR-CIST**, a sex comedy from Capital Productions about a progressive encounter group.

Also from Capital, **BLOODIED MATERS OF DR. Z**, about a mad scientist who desires to break with the system by turning into an underwater creature who goes on a blood-thirsty rampage. Bryanston, who have released **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN** and are about to do the same to Warhol's **DRACULA** will soon distribute Sandy Howard's **THE DEVIL'S BABY**. Howard will also produce **EMBRYO**, the story of human life produced in a test tube, which will be filmed in Canada. AIP is readying for release **THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED** and assures everyone that it's completely unlike a film of the same title they released during the 1950's.

January marked the start of filming **SINBAD AT THE WORLD'S END**, the sequel to Ray Harryhausen's successful **THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD**. The screenplay will be written by Beverly Cross, based on Harryhausen's original story.

In a recent interview, Ray Harryhausen sadly declared that skyrocketing costs and inflation is now making "quality" sfantasy films prohibitively expensive to create. Now, he says, it takes an average of \$1.5 million alone just for the animation and postproduction special effects for one of his films.

With racism, disease possession and psychic phenomena are in the themes these days perhaps the most imagination is **THE WEDNESDAY CHILDREN**, a rock musical that has a bunch of rand kids learning a magic spell from the Devil, enabling them to make all hostile groupies in the world disappear. Warner is releasing **CRAZIE** with Jack Palance as a lunatic antique dealer who seeks out immortal ladies for their blood to slake the thirst of his demon idol. While the plot is more than overly familiar, the film is worthwhile if only for the prestigious cast that includes Trevor Howard, Edith Evans, Saty Kirshner, Diana Dors, Julie Ege and Hugh Griffith. Columbia Releasing's **DARK PLACES** is perhaps the most disappointing entry in this group, in spite of the talents of Christopher Lee, Joan Collins and Herbert Lom. The slow-moving plot centers on Robert Hardy's search for an inheritance that is guarded by its owner's ghost.

**IN SEARCH OF DRACULA** was screened last November at a kiddie-oriented "monster" convention in New York. This is the filmed version of Raymond McNally and Radu Florescu's documented biography of Vlad the Impaler, the true Dracula. Sorry to report that while the 20 minutes screened contained magnificent Transylvanian scenery and interesting anecdotes, Chen Lee walked through his role as if he were participating in a school Xmas pageant. Perhaps the younger portions of the film which had not been edited at the time will be more stirring.

There's a very promising British vampire film soon to be released, it's X-rated and deals with a couple of blood-sucking lesbians. The current title, **VAMPYRES**, may be changed for U.S. audiences. An adult fantasy called **ONCE** stars Christopher Mitchum as Creation. Also for the "over 21" set is **ANGEL NUMBER NINE**, a hard-core Warren's Lub-dubbed flick that is the porno version of **GOODBYE CHARLIE**, wherein a male charlatan does come back to earth as a female to suffer the abuses he dealt out as a man.

On the lighter side is the U.S. made **HOMEBODIES** that effectively combines horror/comedy in relating the attempts of a group of maddened senior citizens to save their retirement apartment building from demolition. There's neither sex nor violence in this Arco Entropy film, but it's very complacently slide—it may be the "dormer" of the year.

Lana Turner, like Bette Davis, Joan Crawford, Gloria Grahame, et al., has joined the ranks of aging super stars-turned-horror actresses in her role of the cosy mother in **PERSECUTION**. Also starring are Ralph Bates and Trevor Howard.

Golden Seal Awards, presented by the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films, at their Second Annual Presentation, went to **THE EXORCIST** as best horror film of 1973-74, **SOYLENT GREEN** as best science fiction film, and **THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD** as the best fantasy.

Good old William Castle is producing **THE HEPHAESTUS PLAGUE** in which foot-long cockroaches scurry out of the ground to trouble Mar. Castle, famous for his exploitation gimmicks, such as the "death by flight" insurance policy of **MACABRE**, and the spook-o-meter glasses in **13 GHOSTS**, will once again stick himself in the muckrock flick by installing windshield wiper type devices under the seats to brush against your legs. And if the roaches don't get you, watch out for the super intelligent ants in **PHASE IV**... they can hypnotize! Whatever! Boss! They're in a film called **THE SWARM**, from POSEIDON ADVENTURE producer from *Alexis*.

And speaking of **THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE**... well, why not—so let's mention one of the all-time best thriller chiller flicks ever made... because you're going to see its sequel—the survivors from the original will be subjected to another sort of trial endurance when they are strapped in train wreck in a tunnel under a reservoir, in what's tentatively titled **Beyond the POSEIDON ADVENTURE**.

In addition to **EARTHQUAKE**, there's a dialogue of Disaster flicks underway—in case you haven't noticed—most notably represented by the oriental smash-hit **THE TOWERING INFERNO**, which is doing more for theater soda consumption than Peter Seller's and Kenny Wynn did for Coca-Cola in **DR. STRANGELOVE**. Besides two big sky-disaster films, **AIRPORT** 1975 and **THE HINDENBURG** (the latter about the famous dirigible, starring George C. Scott), there's a volcano disaster in **THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED**, and an avalanche disaster, **SNOWBOUND**. Finally, earthquakes and tidal waves rock our Japanese friends in **THE SUBMERSION OF JAPAN**.

Reminiscent of a fine Swedish film of some years ago called **THE DOLL**, there's a French-



CoF's own George Stover stars above as the prison chaplain who utters a final prayer for Damn Davenport (Dinner) in these scenes from John (Pink Flamingos) Water's new film, *FEMALE TROUBLE*. The reviews, so far, have been mixed, but the general critical reaction is tremendous enough to determine what many exhibitors have already learned: a sure-fire hit that surpasses FLAMINGOS' (already a heavy cult favorite) strange charisma and controversial appeal.



Carol Speed in high gear in her demonic metamorphosis in **ABBY**.

Spanish production called **GRANDEUR NATURE** (English translation: *Life Stinks*). Story concerns a man, Michel Piccoli, who falls in love with a life-like, life-size doll he's created from Japan. Piccoli's wife desperately converts with the phone numbers, but is disgusted by Piccoli who eventually murders the doll in this fantasy finale.

Veteran actor Forrest Tucker, star of *The Abominable Snowman* of the Himalayas, *The Crawling Eye* and *The Cosmic Monsters*, was recently interviewed while paying a visit in Baltimore, starring in the avoid winning play, "That Championship Season," written by Jason Miller (Father Karras in *THE EXORCIST*). During the interview many questions were asked of Forrest about those films, including his impressions of Peter Cushing, his costar in *ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN*. The full interview (plus many other SF and arts topics) appears in *Black Opals* no. 8, available for \$6.00 from George Stever, P.O. Box 10046, Baltimore, Md. 21204.

Over the past two years PINK FLAMINGOS has developed a phenomenal cult reputation throughout the world. In the wake of its success, director John Waters' *Dreadland Productions* is now releasing **FEMALE TROUBLE**. More "soft-core" and less violent than its predecessor, it reflects a tighter, slicker quality having cost more than twice as much as *FLAMINGOS*. **FEMALE TROUBLE** tells the story of a headline-seeking immortal named Dawn Davenport (played by Divine) whose life is ruined from her teenage years as an obscene suburban girl to her untimely death in the electric chair. Besides Divine, featured are such John Waters veterans as David Lochary, Mary Vivian Pearce, Melk Sola and Keith Moseley. Also featured is Castle of Frankenstein's own George Stever.

making his film debut as the prison chaplain who walks that long, last mile to the electric chair with Dawn Davenport during the film's conclusion (see several of these scenes elsewhere in the dept.)

— George Stever and John Waters

#### SHORT TAKES

**ABBY** (91 min. — AEP — 1974/75). Probably best imitation (so far) of *EXORCIST*, carries a few novel twists of its own, striking Friedman's subtle, creative ambiguities for a more direct "right to the flesh" approach. William (BLACULA) Marshall is excellent in his role as the exorcist managing who finds more than he expects in the dead-possessed Abby, a violent, murderous, womb-spewing terror. Dir. by William Geller. Color Special. Color.

**CHINATOWN** (121 min. — Columbia — 1974). Roman Polanski has directed one of the best films of the year or any year. Jack Nicholson's role as a '30s private-eye, who is entranced in a more complex "case" than he bargained for, dominates most of the story and is in itself a brilliant performance in its own right. It's a unique and rare combination of directional ingenuity and star presence, and may bring back to the screen "star vehicles" characters almost nonexistent more than ten years. Excellent performances also from Faye Dunaway, and from John Huston whose own dramatic triumph, *THE MALTESE FALCON*, is now surpassed in this case. Brilliant camerawork, editing, and dramatics from supporting cast (Polanski in a sticky cameo as Edie Cook Jr.), Color.

**FLESH GORDON** (102 mins. — Marathont-

1974). Very soft-core, semi-porn takeoff on the *Baqua Cubbie FLASH* of the '30s, has surprisingly excellent spell fix, reminiscent from talent that could eventually rise for the Harryhausen throne with more experience. Story, unfortunately, lacks much of the wit and intelligence of its costumes, color and effects. Worth one good look, though, and of special interest to *entomophiles* freaks. Dir. by Howard Ziebel, Jason Williams, Susanna Fields. Color.

**ISLAND AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD** (93 min. — Bassa Vista — 1974). Colorful, action-filled "period" adventure with a Jules Verne touch. In 1907 wealthy Englishman Donald Sinden and his friend, David Hartman, set off in a unique dirigible on an Arctic expedition in search of the sun. They find the youth in a "lost world" surrounded by a host of Vikings who look wild and tough enough to eat metal. Dir. by Robert Stevenson, Jacques Marin, David Gwilym, Agneta Eckberg. Color.

**THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN** (165 min. — UA — 1974). Fine, okay super-thriller, but Bond series shows weaknesses and symptoms of losing momentum appeal with each new addition. Though Roger Moore is one of the best (proven in his great stint several years ago in *The Man Who Haunted Himself*), he can't equal original 007 Sean Connery's ability to combine righteous rage-ruthlessness with dapper suaveness and romantic warmth. But, great nonetheless to see Christopher Lee risking it big for a change in multi-million bucks production at the key moment out to "get" Bond. Dir. by Guy Hamilton. Elvira Madigan, Britt Ekland, Maud Adams. Color.

**AIRPORT 1975** (106 mins. — Univ. — 1974). Should've been made in 1964. Dan's amazement badly directed by who else but, Jack Smight. Costly waste. Clifton James, Gloria Swanson, Myrna Loy, Karen Black. Color.

**AMERICAN GRAPPISTI** (116 min. — Univ. — 1973). An instant classic, shouldn't be missed on any count. Artistically successful reworking of "the way it was" around late 50's-early 60's; dynamic example of film editing, directing at its very best. Dir. by George I. (THX-1138) Lucas. Color.

**CHINEN SURVIVORS** (99 mins. — Col. — 1974). Does ya don't need makes you feel "at home." — wall-to-wall TV. Bits knock off group of people down beneath the earth. They missed the director, Satyajit Ray. Bud Spencer, Jackie Cooper, Alan Alda. Color.

**DON'T LOOK NOW** (110 mins. — Pat. — 1973). Inescapably scene-stealer. Another "instant classic" 10 years greater than *THE EXORCIST*'s darling for terror-and-the-ugly. Not to be missed at any cost. Dir. by Nicolas Roeg. Donald Sutherland, Julie Christie, Cate. **MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS** (127 min. — Pat. — 1974). Like *CHINATOWN*, excellent reworking of a nostalgic "bygone" era succeeds because of "now" generation insight/hindsight. Great cast, production values and direction by Sidney Lumet. Sean Connery, Richard Widmark, Albert Finney, Vanessa Redgrave, and many others. Color.

**THE SAVAGE IS LOOSE** (114 mins. — Campbell Devan — 1974). George C. Scott stars in own film, bravely distributed by him as an effort to prove creative people can or should try to benefit free from Establishment film distribution practices. It's scaring hell out of some in the industry. Well-made film tends on sensitive motherless Oedipus question with intelligence and taste. Trish Van Devere. Color.

(Continued from page 4)

time "behind the scenes," pull back the curtain of mystery, and reveal:

#### Critical moments in film criticizing history

Begging with how *that* notorious and well-disliked reviewer, *Jed Leland*, originally got his job:

"Look, Jed — old Becker's had another stinkus again. Besides, he's been hitting the bottle and screwing around too much lately. How's about dropping funeral and open events and taking over the movie column?"

Jed Leland couldn't believe his ears for a moment. "No offense, Charlie, but if it means not reviewing any more openers starting your wife — yes, anything being that?"

Charlie Kaine grinned broadly, little realizing that Jed would be some day Dr. Anton Phibes' worst enemy.

\* \* \*

How a certain even more dorkish, wacky syndicated reviewer got the job

"Say, Harriet, how long have you handled the daily sewing and heartaches column?"

Adjusting her poorly padded hair underneath her rumpled silk dress, she answered, "Oh, I guess maybe ten or twelve years. Who?"

"What'd ya know about movie pickaboo?"

The cheap jeans glint from the huge Keaton sign across the street glared through the window, giving her acne-scared face a weird ruddy tint. She pondered a moment, pushing a stray wisp of mousy-brown hair behind a sunflower ear.

"What do I know about films? Well, I thought H.G. Wells looked great in CITIZEN KANE. Loved Clark Gable in HOUSE OF THE SEVEN USHERS. Ze Zar Gobbo looked terrific in MOONLAND ROUGE. And for real in-depth film analyses, I rely on MAD magazine."

Editor Dorkdog was now in station, putting down his bottle of Sneaky Pete. "Normally I can't stand sophisticated snobs, but I'll make an exception in your case, kid. The job's yours!"

Burnet Daniels was so delighted over her boss's reaction, she accidentally chewed her copy of MS instead of herologna sandwich, then neatly jumped from her tennis shorts, tearing off her shirt, black socks (the ones with gold clocks) in sheer ecstasy.

\* \* \*

THE VILLAGE VOID, where they were interviewing Yessiah Moshuk at special interviewee review of the sub-underground filimaking empire:

"Kid — we wanna draw in the intellectual suckers — er, I mean, the learned-type readers. We wanna raise money. So, whatdya know 'bout filim?" You know, the words kind with all them dirty words where the fags, chicks and creeps make out — heh, heh."

As usual, Yessiah unfurled his best ergonomic smile, trying to act cool and not too obvious about holding in his hand the latest issue of his own rag, Film Pulse, but he felt very self-confident, inspired after reading Dredd Flodoff's last commercially acceptable comic book strip:

"I know trash about true film art. I know that 'good' film is bad, and bad film is good — especially when I and my friends have

created the great little Z-budget films that others in the outside world loathe with a passion. I also know that the N.Y. Film Festival will remain a mean, dumb little claque until they agree to show our beautiful experimental film masterpieces on the ivied Lincoln Center streets. So, no, not to them, and, too. Too long they've ignored me, and genius! Hey, Ron Baskey, Kenneth Lee and Jake Jekoff! They shall only earn our respect once they've acclaimed our masterpieces like GUNS OF THE CRABGRASS, FLAMING MONSTERS and BEDBUGGS IN THE PAD. Hollywood must also #600 by granting a special Oscar to Taylor Maud for his acting and direction of OUT OF THE CLOSET."

"Art is art's sake. By the way, how much can you pay me?"

\* \* \*

THE VILLAGE VOID, where a war correspondent Andrew Sonnen — famous today for his overlong cadence, "Sonnen's Living Number":

Sonnen: I am profoundly amazed over the opportunity of utilizing my personal sensitivity in evaluating the cinema. Apropos of my filmic preoccupations, allow me to penitute a sample of my verbal verbosity:

Jean-Luc Godard, Truffaut and Pagny, may be hard to divine if you're born

Turbo, but man-on-a-mission, film grammar and genuine artist Will enable you to feel you're in the same league with Voltman.

V. Fad publisher:

Hey, wouldn't you know it. You're also a poet!

\* \* \*

Trying to get hired by CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN:

"I'd really love doing SF antiFilm reviews for you, Mr. Beck. But, honestly, I fail to see the connection between the genre, Rockefeller, Nixon, Ford and the System!"

CTB: "Don't worry yourself about that. We can't all be perfect at first!"

\* \* \*

See you nextissue.

— CTB —



(Continued from page 4)

#### JAPANESE SPANTASY

Dear CTB: Here's some exciting news about three new Japanese, live-action TV shows:

The first is KIKAI-QAA, which concerns a Japanese android, Kikader. He was built by a Dr. Kompa, a captive scientist under a ruthless man called Gill who, in turn, heads a secret organization bent on conquering the world.

He holds the scientist captive so he can produce a whole army of androids with individual super-powers (such as the villainous Ryoko, displayed in the first episode). Dr. Kompa, however, has worked in secret to build Kikader, an android with consciousness programmed into him. Now, Kikader is mankind's only hope against the evil organization. Kikader's alter-ego is Zino, a pop-rock singer who always carries a guitar slung down his back. But when he changes to Kikader, his human features transform into a head full metal on the right side, while his left side is transparent, showing the gears and circuits within. To combat his foes, he uses super-strength and the power of flight.

The next show is KINKYU SHIREI, which, translated, is EMERGENCY COMMAND. It involves a team of men and women, in Black Legion-type uniforms, who encounter anything from a murderous religious insurrection to extraterrestrial energy forms. The team consists of Mori, a brilliant scientist and the Captain who heads the group. Second in command is Chai Iwaki (who looks a lot like Davy Jones of "The Monkees"). Third is Toppel, who provides the comedy relief. And the girls, Sanae and Nami. The different episodes are all exciting, such as the BFH one for example, about extraterrestrials who come into planet to find Spantasy horror?

The German Interview was good, but it strayed too far from his best horror films. And, interviews in CoF are always interesting to read, but when in blazes are you going to interview Dan Curtis? — was annoyed when CoF didn't review OMEGA OF GAUR SHADOWS, which I consider to be the best horror flick of 1976, if not of all time.

"Frankenstein At Large" is great and a department I can really get into; your reviews and comments are invaluable. CoF is going to give its competition a score by appearing more frequently. But, if anyone Marvel's MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES might give you a run for the money. You should continue paying more attention to recent SF-anime products and less emphasis on the past. Also, more in-depth reviews (especially if they're in reprint) released on the CoF Gallery; also, in studio comics, Comics as well as black and white horror magazines.

Finally, CoF should run a poll on the best new SF/Horror/horror films of the year, including made-for-TV movies. A monster "newspaper" (which is the worst feminist publication on the open market) carried something like this, but it was grossly handled, a session of a boy and girl, making them vampires.

The third show is RAINBOW MAN. Although still a half-hour show, it lacks the translational sub-titles which the above two have. This one's about a super-hero, Takeshi, a young soldier who's shot by traitorous comrades, but has his life miraculously restored by a Shizeman type character. Under the guru's training, Takeshi gains astounding powers: he can shoot off fire or water from his fingertips, has the power to generate tonne-sized winds, etc. For each power, he wears a different costume. Those who view R-Man may think it's juvenile, and in some cases I'd agree, but I consider it better than Reeves' SUPERMAN and the equally camp BATMAN with Adam West. If anything, RAINBOW MAN offers a wide variety of costumes and super-powers.

Incidentally, I need any info or material that may be offered for sale from the film, THE VAPOR MAN and the super-hero film, THE GOLDEN BAT. I'd appreciate anyone writing me at: Meusa Kos, P.O. Box 642, Kapaa, Kauai, Hawaii 96746.

## Men's Lib & THE EXORCIST

**Dear CTB:** Although I continue maintaining that you are correct in your analysis of *The Exorcist*, I must point out that buying other directed calls that we will get more involved with the movie is not the best idea. There's really no need of me going into the reasons for my loss retelling your conclusions since it's self-evident to others as far as competitive quality shown.

If I ring off particular value your awareness of an ever changing word out there, one cause sometimes more frightening than any imagination can come up with), but I'm afraid that it must take sight here with you on a suggestion.

In our "Fraternities" TV Movie Guide" under your otherwise well put review of PSV/CHD, you mention that the film does not bring in audience at this time. I hate to disagree, but it's already more than begins, although from what you inferred in your writing, you would rather it be cousin to *Women's Lib*, earned me if I am wrong. As a person emotionally involved with it, I am very aware of the question raised by both the newslett and stay active enough to see the problems of "Manhood" and the masculine cult of machismo.

I am afraid publication in the Men's Lib Movement held the same place as penis envy does in the Women's contingent. Shredding of any sex should not be as any human equity or positivity should not be categorized or qualified by what one has between their legs.

Of course, the world of entertainment—especially that remains largely sexist, as obvious in *THE EXORCIST*—it would not be so shocking of a boy committed masturbation with a crucifix, but girls aren't supposed to be "Neurotic" or "sexual," according dogma and religious training, we wonder if your readers are at an answer of this?

Leonard Treado, 29 E. Van Dam St., Santa Fe, N.M. 87501

Nothing "counts" any harassment anti-feminist movement could ever be implied by me. Rather, what I'm afraid of is that many of the basically noble causes which have grown in recent years have shown grave tendencies of insensitivity—or, at least as far as some of our most outspoken representatives sound, tendentious and sympathetic of machismo. But resemble many. Systemic attitudes that they (for very valid reasons, of course) went elevated or removed. Unfortunately, too many of the most vocal activists behave about as repressive as society's repression. Whether or not deep-set pronouncements or influences in at least, the above are often aimed at bad targets. In the case of Men's Lib—there's something I feel like that their complaints emerge as arrogant, even impudent, against men rather than against social structures and definitions that both sexes have had a hand in creating. Fortunately, this form of myopia, though prevalent, isn't policy nor very widespread. But what many of us would like is recognition of the following fact:

No "movement" is an island unto itself. Just because certain segments of society are without representation and bear no "label" isn't indicative that they do not bear similar woes and agonies. Yet little if any slant is being and about a Men's Lib which would focus attention on such facets as men being the jacks-happy and bearing the brunt of the social hammer overworking them 24 hours a day, dying off like flies at a much earlier age because of such "pressures" leaving whole careers and professions on short, wiped out etc. due to age discrimination (not to mention of a perhaps Youth Cult that parents emphasize of the young). And... let's not forget, *men* along with other Rightful support of a wife and family should never be misinterpreted and treated as an instrument to sole

every nearly all that a husband has worked hard to attain, there are, after all, rewards on book under—just I was recently shocked when a lady actress expressed the idea that, in practically all cases of family co-dependency, the real mother "maur" be the man, "never" the woman. —CB

## CORRECTIONS & SHORT TAKES

**Dear CTB:** In CoF 21 (pg. 42), your first sentence concerning DIMENSION FILM says: "We recently reviewed the CoF 7 WHL you quoted. If you would turn to page 6 of CoF 13, you'd find a review of the film 'The Devil's Gravest', something a missing in Dimension [it's the same—ed.] since our review lists it at \$1.95, and made by United Artists, while the other has it running 78 min. and made by Paramount. Since both refer to the same year, etc., etc., they almost have to be the same. I'd like to know what's the story?" Bill Roberts, 312 W. Wisconsin, Norton, Kan. 67654.

—Story is that the young reporter who did the film review went according to the print he saw in the Four Star Pagoda in San Joaquin, Moogahla. Actually, mistakes like this occur when a staffer can't make thru each of our thousands of listings, thus, it refers to what he thinks is the "new" info—meaning that the last info listed the most current cut-down or censored print. United is the outfit that made the film. But is the distributor. Sometimes full details info is unavailable or censored, this is rare, but does happen.—CTB

**Dear CTB:** Back in CoF 21 you listed THE RESURRECTION OF ZACHARY WHEELER.

and stated you were "unpleasant production info. Well, I have a one sheet poster from the studio, though you might not have the rest of the details, it's very interesting stuff. It lists the cast (listed with symbols in CoF 24), the film was produced by Robert Steiner, directed by Bob Wynn, written by Alan Simms and Tom Rodd. It's a Madison Production, Inc. release and was distributed by Gold Key Entertainment.

**Carl Die Veechie, us/cv., American Peter Cushing Club, 174 Hackensack St., Wood-Ridge, N.J. 07075.**

—Nor trying to get ourselves off the hook, but exemplifying the inaccuracies—addendum or whatsoever—that may arise in running down film data... a current best-seller "Who's guide" is riddled with such omissions, and also lists WHEELER as a "war-for-TV" movie. Also lists CURSE OF THE DEMON as "sci-fi." The writer claims supposed to be a biff. Tak, tak. Well, who the hell is perfect?—CTB.

Various technical problems have thrown us off schedule temporarily. Sorry. Also, the *Loosened NMNY Interview* is now rescheduled for an upcoming issue, together with a number of very important related features.

Tell next issue. Peace.—Cal Beck

Send all CoF letter column mail to

Letters, c/o GOTHIC CASTLE  
509 Fifth Ave.  
New York, N.Y. 10017

\* \* \*





**castle of frankenstein's Back Issue Dept.**



—SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION—  
THE MAMMOT, THROUGH  
THE AIR, THE BORIS KARLOV  
MAGNETIC, THE TIME  
MACHINE, THE BRAIN,  
THE BEER, SEVENTH HELL, PIT  
AND THE PENGUIN, HEARTLAND,  
STEIN TAP, STONED, CHANT OF  
HORN, MYSTERY AND ALLIGA-  
TORE PEOPLE, GHOSTS AND  
THE LITTLE PEOPLE, HOUND OF  
THE BASSEVELLES, HAVE  
ROCKET WILL, TRAVEL, Pur-  
veyor of number one books, TV JE-  
BIS, Japanese manager, BRITISH  
HOBGOS.



**52-VAMPIRE**—A pope horror comic story written and illustrated by Jerry Ikes. The **MANY FACES OF CHRISTOPHER LEE**, a collection of 12 short stories, is also by Jerry Ikes. See **STORY MANHOLE** OR **NOTE PAD**. **DEAD** (1967) **PHANTOM OF THE OPERA** and the **1965 CAMEO OF CALIGARI**, American International, have **EARLY YEARS OF FRANKENSTEIN**, a horror comic strip by Jerry Ikes. **MYTH** also contains Jerry Ikes' super heroes. See **THE DAY THEM FLEW**; Charles Cullen on **DR**.



**#3 - The End FORGOTTEN**  
**FRANKENSTEIN**, *comedy* by  
BORG, KARLOV, STOKE, *dir.*  
King of LON CHANAY in STORIES  
from his own super-horror  
picture stories, on **WHAT EVER  
HAPPENED TO BABY JANET DALE**,  
**OF THE TRINITY**, **THE RAVEN**,  
**CAPTAIN SHAG** and **NIGHT  
CREATURES**, more **SHAG**, *etc.*  
**BIRTH OF FRANKENSTEIN**,  
Charles *as* Boris Karloff, *Shots* Jack  
and Ray *as* Ray Bradbury, *Larry Byrd*  
**FRANKENSTEIN**, **TWILIGHT  
ZONE**, **TEEN-AGE MONSTER**,  
**HAPPENING**



**44 SPECIAL VAMPIRE ISSUE**  
gothic stories of MODERNISATION  
OF THE VAMPIRE, BLACK  
SUNDAY, THE BLOODY  
VAMPIRE, Mike Perry on Hammer,  
Shawley and Elstree vampires  
from Stoker's *Dracula*, vampire  
TANTS, a long lost  
TITANIC STORY, OUR FEATHERED  
FRIENDS—birds in horror stories,  
LEGENDS ON THE HUMANOID, THE  
MURKIN, THE FANG AND THE  
HAUNTING, Clive Barker, Coffin  
Lancecraft, WONDERFUL WORLD  
OF GEORGE PAL, A MURKIN  
WALKS IN THE MIST, READING  
CLIFFORD D. SIMAK, FRANKENSTEIN,  
MONSTERBORN.



**—5—** **Notes** from **WILLIAM M. K.** **"Sheer Pleasure"** **Bennett** recalls his personal encounter with love in **THE PETER LORRE STORY**—with shadow of all Lorre's career. **Review** of **EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN** **Barrymore** expert **Dick Jeffrey** **serves** **MONSTERS OF EDWARD RICHARD BURROUGHS** **Illustrated** by **Fredric March**, **John Gielgud**, **Sam Kydd** and **Al Willis**. **OBRA** **LIMITED** **newspaper** with **Arthur Wimperis** **interview** of **HUGO PRINZON** **OF THE OBRA** **the Cell GLORIES BUT GODDESSES** **OBRA** **SECRETARIAT** **OUT OF THIS WORLD** **WITH BURTON MARX**, **ADAMSON** **FAMILY** **photographed** by **Karen** **in** **1936**.



**6**—The second **FORGOTTEN** report on 2nd Sci-Fi Science Fiction Film Festival, **HORROR ON THE SPOT**, continues with the new phases of the Shudderfest. **SEASIDE** and other great roadhouse, part 3 of **EDM CHANNEL**. **AT STORY**, **COCKTAIL PARADE**, **FRANKENSTEIN**, **MONSTERS**, **CHRIS OF BETH**, **THE MATURE GUIDE**, **TRAVESTIES** TO MOVIEGUIDE. **James**, all hours on **CH-2**.



47-Mike Perry goes on visit to the cell of E.L. MONSTER, DEB, interview with AIP director Donald R. Joseph & Lorraine \$15.000. Monroe Robert C. Remond tells all about the MONSTERS AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, review of TOMB OF LUDIA, interview of LOU CHANEY history, checklist of Cheung 2000 different versions of THE Perry's EUROPEAN HORROR SCREAM, TV interviews, B-SCREAMS, THE AVENGERS, GLE & LUCCO'S THE AVENGERS, the RICHARD BUR-



**R&B** Behind the scenes with RU MURCHISON and Christopher Lee, David McCallum—The Man from U.N.C.L.E., William K. Hartman—The Love Boat, and more...  
Legato, Mike Powers interviews Hammer maker and Bay Author, Elmore RASPBERRY. On the Sets of *THREE'S COMPANY*, Lee Carter goes on stage. The *MONK*—Illustrator Brooks Atkinson. *COLT 45*—John Wayne, Pepe Melendez for Mayor position.  
**BATMAN**—From *THREE'S COMPANY* to *1949-TV*, **DON CRANSTON** comments on his career. See **SOURCE** about **BATMAN**.

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#9—Exclusive—question-and-answer interview with Bert I. Gordon, action-reviewer of ABC-TV's *BATMAN*, with the author as "The Frankenstein Monster"! Includes complete biography of Louie Leterrier, aka "Lester" in the story of a real KING KONG; interview with Lee Charon, ex-superhero of *BATMAN*, *THESE ARE THE BRAHMIN*, and *OUT OF THE PIT*; review of *THE ADVENTURES OF BAT-FINGER AND BOO*. Frankenstein TV: *Mars Attacks!* (C) and *Hannibal* book reviews; discussion of Col. Will Easler's *The Spirit*. Feature review by Mike McNamee; full-color book cover by famous fantasy illustrator Halsted Bob.



#10—Larry Strode reveals the true facts behind Bob Luster's Dragon-Dove Addiction, first part of the Frankenstein biography; chapter 1 in the story of a real KING KONG; interview with Lee Charon, ex-superhero of *BATMAN*, *THESE ARE THE BRAHMIN*, and *OUT OF THE PIT*; review of *THE ADVENTURES OF BAT-FINGER AND BOO*. Frankenstein TV: *Mars Attacks!* (C) and *Hannibal* book reviews; discussion of Col. Will Easler's *The Spirit*. Feature review by Mike McNamee; full-color book cover by famous fantasy illustrator Halsted Bob.



#11—Hundreds of facts in the Star Trek Series: Namey as Spock, Star Trek Features; interview with Col. Will Easler; interview with Lee Charon, ex-superhero of *BATMAN*, *THESE ARE THE BRAHMIN*, and *OUT OF THE PIT*; review of *THE ADVENTURES OF BAT-FINGER AND BOO*. Frankenstein TV: *Mars Attacks!* (C) and *Hannibal* book reviews; discussion of Col. Will Easler's *The Spirit*. Feature review by Mike McNamee; full-color book cover by famous fantasy illustrator Halsted Bob.



#12—World of Comic Books: the new *Gamma Ray* Issue; review of *THE GHOST IN THE SHELL*; interview with *Starman* creator Jim Head; review of *SMASH GORDON* comic strip series; the unusual *COMIC BOOK* strip series; interview with Donald Pyle; review of *THE HOUSE CHAMBER OF DR. FAUSSON*; and lives to tell about in 1986 Neurology, taking charge of his own destiny. The Man Behind the Camera: issues on Marvel's mighty Jim Steranko, cartoon characters of Nick Fury; Col. Will Easler's *THE BRAHMIN* of *MARVEL PRESENTS*; Frankenstein books beginning with "I" and "J"; a look at *Conqueror* Random House; Col. Will Easler's *The Year in Horror-Hysteria*; Books, the ultimate guide to reading; *Horror* full-color book cover by Horace Beck; world-famous *Horror* Previews; *Horror* photo.



No. 13—Special All-Star issue "2001: A Space Odyssey" analysis/review; interview with RAY BRADBURY; "Planets of The APES Returns" (includes seven featurettes, illustrated for the first time); **BASIL RATHBONE** interviewed for Last Time; Jon Peters' *FBI* profile; coverage & date on ROSEMARY'S BABY, *SARCARA*, etc.; "CAR-MAK" comic strip in the immortal Col. manner; "TV Or Not TV?" (there is a question); **RAGUEL WELCH**.



No. 14—**HARLOFF SPECIAL**: interview with *THE HORROR FILM HISTORY* author RAY BRADBURY; *THE CAMP* by Seymour; *Star Trek* credits; *THE ILLUSTRATED MARVEL*; *Books About Books*; *THE CAMP*; *FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED*; photos from *WIZARD OF OZ*; *Gwandu*, etc.



No. 15—**HISTORY OF HORROR FILM** by *THE HORROR FILM HISTORY* author RAY BRADBURY; *THE OB-LONG BOX*, with Vincent Price; review; review of *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA* with Christopher Lee; *Mike* Blevins' *Comics*; *SMASH GORDON*; **MENT BEHIND THE COMICS**: Frank Brunnen; *BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES*; 2 different critiques; *THE WITCH'S BROOD*; *Horror* fiction; *Horror* column on *Horror* **EDITORIAL**; **BOOK REVIEWS**, ed. Infinitum.



No. 16  
Part 1: **ROBERT BLOCH** interview; *WHEN DINOSAURS ROAMED THE EARTH*; *PLANET OF THE APES*; *ORIGINS*; *GRAY*; *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*; Part 2 & conclusion; *STORY OF HORROR FILMS* recorded; *RED HORROR FILMS* recorded; Two "lost" classics: 1933's *DR. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* and 1934's *THE SIX MUSKETEERS*; by *Wolff*, *Emerson*, *Heller* covers; *Brian Way*; *A COAST OF CONCRETE*; *THE HOUSE CHAMBER*; more than 45 recent *Starling* films—*Plus*, *Letters*, *Head-Horror*, etc., etc., etc., etc.

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No. 17

**ROBERT BLOCH** Interview  
— (CONTINUED) — RONDO  
HATTON Capital article  
of 28 December 1970.  
The M. Spiegel Film Int  
1970 (part 1) — FILMUSIC  
in THE FANTASY FILM  
series of 100 UNPUBLISHED  
“KNUCKLE DRIVEN” SONGS.  
THE MONSTER MAKER  
— FRANKENSTEIN Capsule  
Review of more than 28  
years ago in the *ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY*.  
THE X-13 — CRY OF  
THE DANSEUSE — THE  
CRIMSON CULT — Berlin  
Series — SPOTLIGHT Film  
Magazine is doing Comics,  
Graphics is about another  
interesting issue.



No. 18

**EXCLUSIVE CARAVAGGIO**  
**Interview** — One of Best  
CARAVAGGIO's and Many CAUL-  
ON OF BLOOD — Described  
as "The Most Terrifying Novel  
Horror Children" NIGHT OF THE  
**LIVING DEAD**. — An essay  
on some of the works of H. P.  
**LOVE CRAFT**, with scores of  
illustrations. Includes The  
Shattered Room; The  
Haunted Palace; The Cimmerian  
Horror — *Alderson's* inter-  
view. Horror fantasy, EL TOPO,  
and more. TALES FROM  
**THE CRYPT** — A new comic book made  
it back instead of tick.  
— more than 28 other  
SF/Fantasy book reviews. PLUS  
Book reviews of West Atlanta,  
Stereos, Roy Krasnow, Ken  
Hill, etc.



N. 10

The World of Ray HAR  
RYHAUSEN part II—contin-  
uing from MIGHTY GOD  
YOUNG, 20 MILLION  
MILES TO EARTH, THE  
LAST MAN ON EARTH,  
THE 100, VENUS VS. BRA-  
ZIL, etc.—Reviews and  
review of Hause's A CLOCK-  
WORK ORANGE, "all about  
SILENT RUNNING," an inter-  
view with (Ray) Cooney;  
TUTTI-FRUTTI, A HUMILIATING  
YEAR; DRACULA A.D.  
'73; COUNT TUESDAY DRACULA;  
VAMPIRE CIRCUS; THING  
LIVE AND LET DIE; FREE THE  
NIGHTMARE; THE HOUSE OF  
THE RIFTER; Dr. Jekyll &  
SISTER HYDE—The "H"  
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卷之二

**No. 20**  
Part 2, *concussion of World War* at HARENTHAUSEN, incldg.  
*Jan & the Argonauts*,  
*Madame Bovary*, *Old Ironsides*,  
*The Moon*, *One Man's Way*,  
*Valley of the Geese*, etc.  
Plus Article featured in *Vault of Honor*—*Fatalie of Blood*  
—*Screaming Stair*—*Grove of the Vampires*—*Soldier's Choice*  
—TV *Magnificent*, with the  
comedy *Wings*, *Wings*, *Imaginating*,  
*Playing Favorites*, *Play It Again, Sam*,  
*Also Film Noir*, a *Play*,  
*Poison*, *Contarini*, and other  
great nuggets, *Letters*, *Spuds*,  
*Fascinated*, reviews, scores of *Is*  
and *Isn't* reviews, and a *Ratings*  
on the *Film* at *1952*.



No. 71



No. 22

**ALL ABOUT THE EXORCIST** and how it grew. Director **Bill Friedkin's** **STREETS** **ARE** **BLAZING**, and much behind-the-scenes talk. **Friedkin** is a connoisseur of coffee break chat who can **SWING** **ON** **3** **PIVOT** **WHEELS** **AND** **SWING** **ON** **4**. **The** **Curse** that has surrounded the film to date—**INTERVIEW** **John Vincent Price**, Peter **Cahill** (who has talk about his **EXERCISES** in **THE** **SWIMMING POOL** discussion), **Miguel Riva**, the composer for **1939's** **Thief** **of Bagdad**, Ben Harrr and the current **Golden Voyage** of Michael **Leigh**. **Legend of Hell House:** **Zack Norman** and **some**



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**PLANET OF THE APES** SPECIAL, about the 5 best critical releases, background info on CBS-TV's serial—and a biographical interview with Roddy McDowall. A History of **DOC SAVAGE**, the pulp and comic book hero. The **Big One**, part one of the Roger CORMAN disaster, a look at Jean-Luc Godard's **Two or Three Things I Know About** **ALPHAVILLE**.—**FINDERS**, an amateur and amateurish look at a mystery novel by Agatha Christie. **NOT OF THIS EARTH**, Frankenstein At Large. Reviews of more than 50 current and recent SF fantasy books and discs, letter to the editor.



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Tribute, in the name of the  
Homer COOLIDGE-KARLOFF,  
including Karloff's fine  
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by C. S. editor.

**THE EXERCITIUS II & Lined**  
**BLAIR**—Conduction of the  
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RUBLES. He makes many  
surprising statements.  
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FEARS compared by  
MURKIN—How many and the  
size of their \$25,000  
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